REPORT RESUMES

ED 010 817 24
JULIUS CAESAR. PLUTARCH'S LIVES. AUTOBIOGRAPHY. LITERATURE CURRICULUM IV, STUDENT VERSION.
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OREGON UNIV., EUGENE
REPORT NUMBER CRP-H-149-46
REPORT NUMBER BR-5-0366-46
EDRS PRICE MF-$0.18 HC-$3.00 75P.

DESCRIPTORS- *CURRICULUM GUIDES, *STUDY GUIDES, GRADE 10, CURRICULUM RESEARCH, *ENGLISH CURRICULUM, SECONDARY EDUCATION, LITERATURE PROGRAMS, *ENGLISH LITERATURE, *LITERATURE GUIDES, BIOGRAPHIES, INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS, EUGENE, PROJECT ENGLISH, NEW GRAMMAR, SHAKESPEARE, PLUTARCH

THIS 10TH-GRADE STUDENT GUIDE POSED SOME QUESTIONS AND CLARIFIED OTHERS ON SHAKESPEARE'S "JULIUS CAESAR," AND PRESENTED SHORT SELECTIONS FROM PLUTARCH'S "LIVES" (ON CAESAR, BRUTUS, AND MARK ANTONY) WITH ACCOMPANYING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS. A UNIT OF AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL READINGS OF EARLY LIFE EXPERIENCES WAS ALSO OUTLINED. BY PRESENTING BOTH THE PLAY, "JULIUS CAESAR," AND BIOGRAPHIES RELATED TO HISTORICAL CHARACTERS IN THAT PLAY, THE GUIDE PROVIDED STUDENTS AN OPPORTUNITY TO CONSIDER DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HISTORICAL AND DRAMATIC WRITINGS PERTINENT TO THE SAME HISTORICAL EVENTS. IN ADDITION, THE GUIDE ALLOWED THE STUDENT TO COMPARE WRITING STYLE BETWEEN THE BIOGRAPHIES OF PLUTARCH AND THE AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES IN THE GUIDE'S FINAL SECTION. THE TEACHER VERSION OF THIS GUIDE IS ED 010 818. RELATED REPORTS ARE ED 010 129 THROUGH ED 010 160 AND ED 010 803 THROUGH ED 010 832. (JH)

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JULIUS CAESAR.

PLUTARCH'S LIVES.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

Literature Curriculum IV,
Student Version.

The project reported herein was supported through the Cooperative Research Program of the Office of Education, U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

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THE TRAGEDY OF JULIUS CAESAR

Literature Curriculum IV

Student Version

Shakespeare's The Tragedy of Julius Caesar

"FRIENDS
ROMANS
COUNTRYMAN
lend me your ears."

It is a famous line, the one that opens Mark Antony's funeral oration in Shakespeare's Julius Caesar, often spoken in fun by schoolboys and unconsciously imitated by modern politicians on the stump--

FELLOW AMERICANS
DELEGATES TO THIS GREAT CONVENTION
MY FRIENDS.

The imitation is understandable, for Antony's oration is a political speech and Antony himself one of the leaders of the pro-Caesar party--"party" of course not quite in our sense--in ancient Rome in the second half of the last century before Christ. The speech (you may have seen a photograph of the ruins of the Roman Forum, or market-place, where the original speech was given) is directed at what may be called the Roman electorate and is shrewdly designed to turn the audience against the anti-Caesar party and enlist the populace in Antony's cause. At this point, however, any resemblance to a political speech in a modern democracy ends, for Antony's real aim is to incite riot and sow destruction. He succeeds, and at the end of the funeral scene, after the mutilated corpse of the dead dictator has been revealed, the assassins of Caesar have "rid like madmen through the gates of Rome." Civil war follows.

Julius Caesar is a bloody play. Its subject is political action. Its central event is assassination. Although the main events of the plot took place two thousand years ago and the play itself probably was written in 1599, the issues are still felt as live ones by modern audiences. It was one of the first plays of Shakespeare to be played in modern dress.

A brief summary of the first part of the play's political narrative may serve to lead us into the drama as a whole. At the beginning, Caesar is in power in a state that still had a "republican" constitution. He has been a great general as well as a political leader, and has recently defeated his rival Pompey in a civil war that had broken out between them and their followers. He is popular with the masses (in the first scene they have come into the streets to celebrate his victory over Pompey) and his opponents fear that he wishes to be crowned king. This would have brought the ancient constitutional republic to an end. All of this is history.

Some members of the Roman senate have decided that Caesar's dangerous ambition (as they see it) must be blocked, and, his power being what it is, this can be done only by his death. Cassius is the ringleader of the conspiracy, and in the first two acts his immediate aim is to bring his friend Marcus Brutus into the plot. The conspirators need Brutus (both he and Cassius are also experienced soldiers), especially because of his honorable reputation, the trust in which he is held. If Brutus can be persuaded to join with them, they can hope to win support for their cause after the ambitious Caesar is eliminated. (Does this suggest that the other conspirators are something less than honorable, that their motives may not be entirely pure? It is a question to be kept in mind as you read the play.)

After some profound indecision Brutus comes to the conclusion that the assassination is justified, and tactics are planned at night in Brutus' orchard. Once committed to the cause, Brutus assumes leadership, arguing particular issues with Cassius with persuasive eloquence. The conspirators seal their pact by ceremonial handclasps, and all that remains is to make sure that Caesar will come to the meeting of the Senate the next day, since the Senate-house is to be the scene of the assassination.[1] The responsibility for getting him there is assigned to Decius Brutus. All the conspirators will deliver at least one wound to their victim: all must share in this "honorable" crime.

The fatal decision has been made. From it issue all of the succeeding events of the tragic drama as Shakespeare arranges them for us.

Conflict supplies much of the interest all drama, comic as well as tragic, holds for us. For instance, conflict appears in The Merchant of Venice in the competition for the hand of Portia and in the matching of wits in the great courtroom scene. In Julius Caesar conflict is continuous and intense. It is most obvious and spectacular in the assassination scene and the battle scenes of the civil war that is the main action of the play's last two acts. Then there is the kind of conflict that takes the form of argument or debate, which one might expect to find in a play about politics; for example, the differences of opinion between Cassius and Brutus: should Antony be killed along with Caesar, should he be allowed to give the funeral oration? The two orations themselves take the form of arguments for the defence and for the prosecution. When the war begins, there are quarrels within the two factions: between Antony and Octavius Caesar and between Brutus and Cassius. Finally, there is the kind of conflict that takes place within the individual--the conflict in Brutus, for instance, between his personal loyalty to Caesar and his devotion to a political ideal.

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[1] Other senate chambers have sometimes been settings for scenes of violence--our own, for instance: "When Senator Sumner made a vehement verbal attack on Senator Butler of South Carolina in 1856, Preston Brooks, a Representative from the same state and a relative of the latter, replied in terms of physical force, catching Sumner unawares and beating his victim senseless with a heavy cane. Though the act was not strictly chivalrous--for Sumner, wedged in between his chair and his desk, could not defend himself--admiring South Carolinians gave Brooks a grand banquet and presented him with a new cane bearing the words: 'Use knockdown arguments'" --The Rise of American Civilization, by Charles and Mary Beard.

In watching and studying all of these conflicts, we may find ourselves somehow involved in them. We may feel a kind of conflict in ourselves. As Brutus works his way toward his several decisions, are his reasons good ones or bad ones? Or are they partly good and partly bad, the usual human mixture? Such speculations lead into questions about the characters themselves, into questions of moral judgment. How do we feel about Brutus and Cassius and Caesar and Antony? In melodrama, in many television shows, characters are usually either all white or all black, "good guys" or "bad guys." Is this true of the characters in great tragedies? Do we feel sympathetic and hostile toward them by turns, or even sympathetic and hostile at the same time? Examine your reactions as you read. What reasons can you find for your judgments?

There are related questions about Shakespeare's attitude toward his characters. Antony at the end, after the suicide of Brutus, praises him for his nobility. In the funeral oration earlier, however, he treats Brutus' honor with scathing sarcasm. Does Shakespeare seem to suggest that both attitudes may be justified? How does he feel about Caesar's ambition, about the assassination itself? Does the play reveal Shakespeare's own political views? Your class discussions of such questions will themselves probably take the form of debate. Could your own arguments be made the subject of a play?

The play's political narrative deals with great public issues involving the destiny of a great empire. Shakespeare understood, however, that the private or personal motives and passions of men in public life influence their decisions and help determine the fate of nations. So his dramatic narrative has a strong personal as well as political interest. The friendship between Brutus and Cassius, the "love" they have for one another, is a most significant aspect of the story. How does Cassius use Brutus' friendship in the first part of the drama? Does his behavior at that time cast doubt on the sincerity of his "love" for Brutus? How is his feeling for Brutus made to appear later--for instance in the scene of their quarrel in the fourth act?

What is the significance of the sharply-drawn contrast between Cassius of the "lean and hungry look," the Cassius who "thinks too much," and the athletic Antony, the lover of plays and music? What have plays and music to do with political issues? And the wives of the two main characters, Portia and Calpurnia--why does the playwright bring them into it? What use does he make of Portia's suicide near the end? --Your answers to such questions may indicate that our interest in the personal fortunes of the characters is at least as great as our interest in the large public issues.

The play's full title is The Tragedy of Julius Caesar, but when you have finished reading it you may decide that it should have been called The Tragedy of Marcus Brutus, since Caesar seems rather effectively eliminated in the third act, and even before that the major emphasis seems to be placed on Brutus. The question may not, however, be very important. Perhaps a tragedy may have two heroes --or even three.

You will in any case want to discuss what elements in the play seem to justify calling it a "tragedy." Certainly there is the kind of catastrophe usually called tragic--three of them, in fact: Caesar is killed, and both Brutus and Cassius are suicides.

In the second place, in most great tragedies the hero is made partly responsible for his fall, so that the catastrophe appears as a kind of justice. It is generally thought, however, that the fall of a completely bad man is not tragic but the simplest kind of justice, arousing none of the pity usually associated with tragedy, inspiring no sense of loss. How do you feel about the three deaths in this play? We may pass over the murder of poor Cinna the poet, killed for his bad verses--justice? In what different ways are the victims responsible for what happens to them? Do they all have redeeming qualities?

Finally, there is something that may be called "tragic knowledge." At some time before his end, the hero comes to a full realization of what has happened to him, and to some understanding of the fault within himself that led to his predicament. Tragedy involves a vast discrepancy between men's intentions and their results. The truth comes too late for the hero to avoid the catastrophe, but it does come. In facing it honestly, the hero is partly redeemed. Is there such tragic knowledge in Julius Caesar?

These are some of the problems and questions raised by this play. It has also another kind of interest. Its main events were taken by Shakespeare from a work written in Greek by a biographer named Plutarch in the first century A. D. It is known as Plutarch's Lives, and was translated into English by Sir Thomas North about twenty years before Shakespeare wrote his play. If there is time your teacher may ask you to read some short selections from Plutarch's "Lives" of Caesar, Brutus, and Antony. You may then consider some of the differences between historical and dramatic writing and speculate about the reasons why Shakespeare did not feel bound to follow his historical "source" in every detail. It is a way of arriving at a better understanding of the nature both of literature and history.

FIRST PHASE--CAESAR AND THE SEDUCTION OF BRUTUS

ACT I THROUGH ACT II, SCENE 1

1. Do Flavius and Marcellus seem to fulfill their role as tribunes, elected guardians of the rights and privileges of the commoners? What attitudes do they display toward the people? Toward Caesar? Toward Pompey?

2. What was the commoners' attitude toward Pompey in the past? What is the commoners' attitude toward Caesar? Do they seem easily swayed by the tribunes? If so, what might you expect from them in the actions which will follow?

3. What is the significance of "disrobing" the statues of Caesar?

4. Try to imagine how this scene might be set (I, 1)? How do the commoners dress and act? How would you arrange the people on the stage? How do the tribunes dress? How do they act and speak? What differences do you see between the language of the commoners and that of the tribunes? How do the commoners make their exit? What bit of humor does Shakespeare introduce in this scene? Do you think the cobbler is more clever than Flavius? Which one seems to win the battle of words?

5. What is the Lupercalia? What political implication might be seen in Caesar's desire to have an heir?

6. How can you interpret Caesar's willingness to answer the person who calls out his name? What warning does the soothsayer give Caesar? What might Caesar's lack of concern indicate?

7. Brutus and Cassius are left alone on the stage, and the conspiracy begins with Cassius taking the lead. What does Cassius say he has observed in Brutus lately? What does Cassius claim is his feeling for Brutus? Brutus's answer provides a splendid opening for Cassius to move a little more deeply into his plan. "Tell me, good Brutus," he says, "can you see your face?" Again the reply serves Cassius's purpose well. What does Cassius hint at in lines 61-67 (I, 2)? What is significant in Brutus's reply? That Cassius is clever is immediately apparent. Cassius offers himself as Brutus's mirror or glass. Where is the irony in this passage? What typical deception tactics does Cassius use in lines 71-83?

8. Sounds of the festivities reach the ears of the conspirators. Do you think it is too soon to call Brutus a conspirator or do you think he is unaware of what Cassius is doing? Brutus claims to love Caesar. He claims to love the name of honor more than he fears death. Remember these claims as the play progresses. Do you see what Brutus means

when he says he is a man "with himself at war"? What are his feelings for Caesar? For the Republic?

9. Cassius is a master at deception. Follow the pattern of his thoughts as he manipulates Brutus. What "sure winners" does he employ in lines 96-105? What does he achieve by referring to Caesar's physical infirmities?

10. Again a flourish of trumpets reminds the two of Caesar's growing popularity and power. Cassius continues his flattery. "The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars, but in ourselves, that we are underlings. 'Brutus' and 'Caesar': what should be in that 'Caesar?' Why should that name be sounded more than yours?" Read lines 141-167 several times to savor their complete meaning. To what motive in Brutus does Cassius finally appeal? Discuss Cassius as you judge him from his words and actions up to this point in the play.

11. Caesar and his train return. Cassius arranges to involve Casca in the conspiratorial conversation. How does Brutus determine that something of importance has transpired? How does Caesar analyze Cassius? How does Antony view him? Which of the two seems to be the wiser judge of human nature? What do you think is Antony's attitude toward Caesar?

12. When Casca, Cassius, and Brutus are alone on the stage once more, Casca tells the others what has transpired at the festival. State briefly the chief events he relates.

13. Brutus and Casca, having arranged for a future meeting with Cassius, depart. Alone on the stage, Cassius reveals the next step in his plot What does he reveal? Does Cassius still feel he must exert pressure on Brutus?

14. Scene 3 of Act I can be considered as a dramatic bridge connecting the seduction scene with the conclusion of the conspiratorial plot in Brutus's orchard (II, 1). In this scene the audience is, in a sense, prepared for the assassination of Caesar. Do the disorders in the natural world seem a reasonable parallel to the disorders in the world of man? Explain.

15. What is the thematic significance of Cicero's comments (I, 3, lines 33-35)?

16. How does Cassius interpret the disorders in the world of nature?

17. In light of Cassius's closing remarks to Casca, how do you view Cassius's earlier declaration of his love for Brutus?

18. There is a danger of oversimplifying Brutus by assuming that he simply decides to assassinate Caesar for the good of the Republic. There can be much speculation about the complexity of Brutus. Consider the following. Which line in Act II, Scene 1, shows Brutus's

resolution to join the conspirators? Which senator wants the conspirators to take an oath? What does this tell you about this senator? Where else in this scene did he reflect a similar attitude? In lines 10 to 34 Brutus seems to be constructing a solid basis for the decision that Caesar must die. Follow Brutus's reasoning. Caesar may become king, and this new role might change his nature. It is possible that Caesar may lose his capacity for mercy, for when a man climbs to new heights, he tends not to look down. Caesar, who, after all, is still a man, may follow this pattern. This is Brutus's position. Does the real Caesar -- the Caesar Brutus knows -- indicate that he will follow this pattern? Where does the flaw lie in Brutus's rationalization?

19. One must not, however, overlook the struggle he reveals in lines 81-89. What is his feeling toward conspiracy? Could this conflict be responsible for his downfall?

20. In I, 1 when the conspirators meet Brutus, what does the group discuss as soon as they enter? Why don't they come to the point immediately? Cassius seems to have a special role in this gathering. What is it? Why do Cassius and the other conspirators need Brutus to participate?

21. With a clasp of hands the conspirators are in common agreement, and Brutus assumes the role of leader. He immediately refuses to follow Cassius's proposal that Antony must fall with Caesar. This is the first of three occasions in the play when Brutus turns aside his friend's advice. How do their positions concerning what should or should not be done to Antony reveal something about each one's personality? Consider Cassius in particular. Is Cassius a good politician? Why? By the end of the play you will know whose judgment of men is really more valid, Cassius's or Brutus's. Why does Brutus have contempt for Antony? What does he not recognize in Antony? What similarities do you see between Cassius and Antony?

22. The last of II, 1 concerns an interchange between Brutus and Portia. Portia has observed the conspirators leave. It is quite late, but she has been waiting to talk to her husband. What has been bothering her? What sort of relationship has existed between Brutus and Portia? What word begins to appear over and over, first between Portia and Brutus and later when Caius Visits? Pay particular attention to lines 334-335. What future developments of the play are foreshadowed?

SECOND PHASE: THE ASSASSINATION AND THE TRIUMPH OF ANTONY

ACT II, SCENE 2 THROUGH ACT III

23. Act II, 2, 3, 4 continue to anticipate the future. Consider the connotative meaning of storm in terms of the conflicts in this drama.

How many different storms does Shakespeare allude to by having one appear on the stage as a theatrical effect?

24. What dominant trait of Caesar's character appears in these scenes that might support your first impression of him?

25. Caesar is disturbed because Calpurnia seems to be on edge. Why does she ask Caesar to stay home instead of going to the capitol? Caesar is about to follow his wife's advice when Decius Brutus changes his mind. How does Decius Brutus manipulate Caesar? Do his comments about Calpurnia's dream change Caesar's plans? Can you see more than one reason why Decius Brutus repeats to Caesar the rumor earlier reported by Casca: "The Senate has concluded to give this day a crown to mighty Caesar"? Which reason do you think Decius Brutus really had in mind? Had Caesar lived to be offered the crown for the fourth time, would he have refused once more? Defend your position. Had the conspirators any way of knowing what Caesar might have done?

26. Read III, 1 (39-77). Does Caesar's attitude in these passages reinforce your answer to question 24? Reread Brutus's soliloquy in the orchard (the beginning of Act II). Do Caesar's remarks in lines 39-77 support Brutus's earlier speculations about Caesar?

27. Considering what happens to Julius Caesar in III, 1, what is ironical about a comment he had made earlier (line 65)? What generalization about man as the controller of his destiny can be drawn from this irony?

28. Immediately after Caesar dies, Cinna shouts "Liberty! Freedom! Tyranny is dead!" To what lines, spoken earlier in the act by Julius Caesar, does this triumphant cry contrast?

29. How does Mark Antony react immediately after Julius Caesar's death? What is the first thing he does? Later when he returns to the assassins, how does he conduct himself? Pay attention to his manner of speech. Notice his manner of bearing after he has been assured of his own safety (lines 162-176). Study lines 197-224. In what way might this speech be considered as an overture to a shift of power in the play? What line in this speech (lines 197-260) indicates whether or not he has forgiven Brutus and his followers? How does Antony's shaking hands parallel a similar incident earlier in this play? How would you explain this as irony?

30. When Antony joins the assassins, he is quite confident--almost to the point of boldness. How would you interpret his speeches from lines 208 to 220 and lines 233 to 237? Pay particular attention to lines 236 and 237.

31. Cassius objects to Antony's request to speak at the funeral ceremony. Once again he is overruled by Brutus. (Remember when Brutus turned down Cassius's proposal that Antony must fall with Caesar.) Why is Brutus not particularly worried about Antony?

32. The assassins leave, and Antony, now alone, reveals in Scene II (lines 254-275) his true feelings toward the present state of affairs. How will he receive any explanation Brutus offers about the killing? In a soliloquy (lines 275-295) what future does Antony predict for the assassi as well as all of Rome? What new aspect of the play does this soliloquy introduce?

33. The opening of Act III, 2 clearly announces the coming battle, first in the form of orations in the market place and later in the swords on the battlefield. The Plebeians demand satisfaction. They want to know why Julius Caesar lies murdered. Brutus is confident of his oratorical abilities. Read carefully Brutus's speech to his countrymen (lines 13-40). How does he justify the act? Notice that he uses prose. What can you say about words such as the following: cause, honor, respect, wisdom, love, fortune, valor, ambition, glory? Are they abstract or concrete? Do these words appeal to the heart or the mind? Now, look at some of his sentence structure.

> "Believe me for mine honor, and have respect to mine honor, that you may believe."
>
> "Not that I loved Caesar less, but that I loved Rome more."
>
> "Had you rather Caesar were living and die all slaves, than that Caesar were dead to live all freemen?"
>
> "As Caesar loved me, I weep for him, as he was fortunate, I rejoice in it."

What rhetorical pattern makes these sentences appealing? Does the prose suggest that Brutus wishes to appeal only to the reason of his listeners? Does the crowd react in an emotional or a reasonable manner. (See lines 48-52)

34. Now, consider Antony's speech (lines 80-113 and 129-148). Locate areas where he appeals strictly to the emotion (i. e., lines 111-114). Notice the concrete words Antony uses in describing Caesar and how he was murdered. What does Antony achieve by reiterating that the conspirators (and Brutus in particular) were honorable men? What evidence does Antony offer to demonstrate that Caesar, while alive, was not ambitious? (Lines 95, 96, 98, 101.) Why does Antony refrain from reading the will immediately? How does this maneuver strengthen his basic objectives for his speech? What does he intend to accomplish through this speech? Locate lines to Support your view. What news does Antony receive about Lepidus and Octavius? What "savage spectacle" occurs in Act III, 3? Can you see any reason why Shakespeare included this scene?

THIRD PHASE: THE REVENGE OF CAESAR

ACTS IV AND V

35. As the third phase of the drama begins, we see a world of dissension. The bickering of Antony, Octavius, and Lepidus does not seem important to the action of the play. It foreshadows, perhaps the eventual war between Antony and Octavius, a matter of history with which Shakespeare's audience was generally familiar. But the growing dissension between Brutus and Cassius, although not advancing the main action, is of great and immediate concern as we try to understand the characters of these two men. What is the immediate cause of the quarrel between Brutus and Cassius? Brutus says, "Did not great Julius bleed for justice' sake?" Could he, perhaps, be questioning his own motives in the assassination as he accuses Cassius of dishonor? Or is he convinced that he was "strong in honesty"? What do you think of Brutus's attitude toward Cassius? How does Cassius react to Brutus's treatment? Very early in the play Cassius declared his love for Brutus. Do you feel that he was sincere in light of what you have learned in this scene? Consider in particular IV, 3, lines 94-118. How do the two seem to resolve their disagreement? Has your attitude toward Cassius changed? Explain.

36. What is the purpose of having the poet enter? What is Cassius's attitude toward the poet? Brutus's attitude? Who shows the greater understanding of human nature? Defend your answer.

37. Compare Cassius's attitude toward Portia's death with the stoical calm which Brutus displays.

38. For the third and final time Brutus overrules the counsel of Cassius. What arguments does Brutus give for the march on Philippi?

39. Just before the appearance of Caesar's ghost, there is music and song. How would the audience be affected? Does the ghost give any hint of what is to occur at Philippi?

40. The final act moves with great rapidity. Brutus and Cassius take formal leave of each other knowing that neither will be able to control the events which are to come. Cassius commits suicide. What does Titinius mean when he says, "Alas, thou hast misconstrued everything?" How do you react to Antony's generous tribute to the dead Brutus? Defend your answer.

41. In the introduction to the play given in the Student Version, a number of questions were suggested which you should be able to answer now that you have completed the play. Be prepared to discuss the issues suggested by the questions. Perhaps your teacher will suggest panel discussions or debates. Your understanding of the play as a whole will be greatly enriched by a sharing of intelligent, defensible opinions.

OREGON CURRICULUM STUDY CENTER

SELECTIONS FROM PLUTARCH'S "LIVES"

of

Julius Caesar

Marcus Brutus

Marcus Antonius

as translated by

SIR THOMAS NORTH
(1579)

Literature Curriculum IV

Student Version

Student Version

PLUTARCH

1. Plutarch the Greek

We do not know much about the life of the Greek writer Plutarch --not nearly as much as we know about the lives of the great Romans Julius Caesar and Marcus Brutus and Marcus Antonius; and the interesting thing about that is that much of what we know about them comes from what Plutarch wrote about them. Plutarch was not a "great man" in the way that Caesar and Brutus and Antony were; he was not a political or military leader, he did not exert any influence upon the course of what is usually called history. He was only a writer; a teacher of what was called Rhetoric; an historian and biographer. Of course such an observation may raise some questions about what we think "greatness" really is, leading to the old debate about the sword and the pen. In any case, Plutarch at least would not have thought of comparing himself in importance with the great men he wrote about.

He was born in a small town in Greece about 50 A. D., nearly one hundred years after the assassination of Julius Caesar. As teacher and lecturer he traveled widely, and on the occasion of a visit to Rome read everything he could find on the related histories of Rome and Greece, in preparation for the writing of his major work, the Parallel Lives of the Greeks and Romans. He arranged them in pairs, the life of each Greek hero followed by the life of a Roman whose career had been such as to justify comparison and contrast. There are twenty-three such pairs, which as a whole constitute a history of Greece and Rome from earliest times down to the establishment of the Empire under Augustus Caesar (the Octavius Caesar of Shakespeare's play) in 27 B. C., for which the assassination of Julius Caesar in 44 B. C. prepared the way. Plutarch thought of the assassination as the climax of a long coherent story extending over a period of several centuries.

In the sixteenth century in Europe there was a great revival of interest in classical antiquity and the study of the Greek language, which had not been known in western Europe during the Middle Ages. In 1599 a French teacher of Greek named Jacques Amyot published a French translation of Plutarch's Lives, and twenty years later an English translator named Sir Thomas North turned Amyot's French into English. North's Plutarch, a heavy and expensive folio volume of more than a thousand pages, was popular among the educated people of Shakespeare's England, who, although many of them knew Latin well, had little or no Greek.

You are about to read short versions of the three Lives upon which Shakespeare's Julius Caesar was primarily based. The stories themselves are good ones, and for Elizabethans probably held an interest similar to the interest we find in novels. Plutarch provides more factual detail than Shakespeare does, and the complete versions of the Lives are of course much more thorough accounts than a play could possibly be.

At first, you may wonder why you should read Plutarch in addition to Shakespeare, when the two writers seem simply to be telling the same story. There is, however, a special pleasure in traveling through territory previously visited, the pleasure that derives from having the advantage of some prior knowledge, which sharpens the eye for new discoveries. Interesting changes may also have been made during one's absence. As you read, that is, you will begin to realize that although Plutarch's story often seems to be the same as Shakespeare's, actually you are reacting to it differently. What reasons can you find for the differences in effect? What is the difference between telling a story and showing it on a stage? How do Plutarch's views of his characters differ from Shakespeare's view? How does Shakespeare's poetic presentation differ in its results from Plutarch's prose?

There are also differences between the historian's job of work and the playwright's. The historian's work should be firmly grounded in fact, and the historian's facts should be verified. Because of this there are certain similarities between historical and scientific writing (some examples of which you are also reading this year). Well, the playwright also uses "facts": Shakespeare's Julius Caesar puts, you might say, Plutarch's facts on the stage. But how is the dramatist's interest in the facts different from the historian's, and how do their interpretations of the facts differ? What is history, what is drama, really?

Such questions, which are extended in the section, following the text, and others that will occur to you to ask, may suggest something about the kind of interest to be found in reading a short selection from Plutarch's Lives at this time.

THE LIFE OF JULIUS CAESAR

(1) Now Caesar immediately won many men's good wills at Rome through his eloquence in pleading of their causes; and the people loved him marvellously also, because of the courteous manner he had to speak to every man and to use them gentlely, being more ceremonious therein than was looked for in one of his years. Furthermore, he ever kept a good board, and fared well at his table, and was very liberal besides; the which indeed did advance him forward, and brought him in estimation with the people. His enemies judging that this favour of the common people would soon quail when he could no longer hold out that charge and expense, suffered him to run on, till by little and little he was grown to be of great strength and power. But in fine, when they had thus given him the bridle to grow to this greatness and that they could not then pull him back, though indeed in sight it would turn one day to the destruction of the whole state and commonwealth of Rome, too late they found that there is not so little a beginning of any thing, but continuance of time will soon make it strong, when through contempt there is no impediment to hinder the greatness. Thereupon Cicero, like a wise shipmaster that feareth the calmness of the sea, was the first man that, mistrusting his manner of dealing in the commonwealth, found out his craft and malice, which he cunningly cloaked under the habit of outward courtesy and familiarity.

(2) 'And yet,' said he, 'when I consider how finely he combeth his fair bush of hair, and how smooth it lieth, and that I see him scratch his head with one finger only, my mind gives me then that such a kind of man should not have so wicked a thought in his head as to overthrow the state of the commonwealth.' But this was long time after that.

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(3) All these things they say he did before the wars with the Gauls. But the time of the great armies and conquests he made afterwards, and of the war in the which he subdued all the Gauls (entering into another course of life far contrary unto the first), made him to be known for as valiant a soldier and as excellent a captain to lead men, as those that afore him had been counted the wisest and most valiantest generals that ever were and that by their valiant deeds had achieved great honour. For whosoever would compare the house of the Fabians, of the Scipios, of the Metellians, yea, those also of his own time, or long before him, as Sylla, Marius, the two Lucullians, and Pompey self-

Whose fame ascendeth up unto the heavens

-it will appear that Caesar's prowess and deeds of arms did excel them all together. The one, in the hard countries where he made wars; another, in enlarging the realms and countries which he joined unto the Empire of Rome; another, in the multitude and power of his enemies whom he overcame; another, in the rudeness and austere nature of men with whom he had to do, whose manners afterwards he softened and made civil; another, in courtesy and clemency which he used unto them whom he had conquered; another, in great bounty and liberality bestowed upon them that served under him in those wars; and in fine, he excelled them all in the number of battles he had fought and in the multitude of his enemies he had slain in battle. For in less than ten years' war in Gaul he took by force and assault above eight hundred towns; he conquered three hun dred several nations; and, having before him in battle thirty hundred thousand soldiers, at sundry times he slew ten hundred thousand of them, and took as many more prisoners.

(4) Furthermore, he was so entirely beloved of his soldiers that, to do him service, where otherwise they were no more than other men in any private quarrel, if Caesar's honour were touched, they were invincible and would so desperately venture themselves, and with such fury, that no man was able to abide them. . . .

(5) Now Caesar's self did breed this noble courage and life in them. First, for that he gave them bountifully, and did honour them also, showing thereby that he did not heap up riches in the wars to maintain his life afterwards in wantonness and pleasure, but that he did keep it in store, honourably to reward their valiant service; and that by so much he thought himself rich, by how much he was liberal in rewarding of them that had deserved it. Furthermore, they did not wonder so much at his valiantness in putting himself at every instant in such manifest danger, and in taking so extreme pains as he did, knowing that it was his greedy desire of honour that set him afire, and pricked him forward to do it; but that he always continued all labour and hardness, more than his body could bear, that filled them all with admiration. For, concerning the constitution of his body, he was lean, white, and soft skinned, and often subject to headache, and otherwhile to the falling sickness (the which took him the first time, as it is reported, in Corduba, a city of Spain); but yet therefore yielded not to the disease of his body, to make it a cloak to cherish him withal, but, contrarily, took the pains of war as a medicine to cure his sick body, fighting always with his disease, travelling continually, living soberly, and commonly lying abroad in the field. For the most nights he slept in his coach or litter, and thereby bestowed his rest, to make him always able to do something. And in the daytime, he would travel up and down the country to see towns, castles, and strong places.

(6) He had always a secretary with him in his coach, who did still write as he went by the way, and a soldier behind him that carried his sword. He made such speed the first time he came from Rome, when he had his office, that in eight days he came to the river of Rhone. He was so excellent a rider of horse from his youth that, holding his hands behind him, he would gallop his horse upon the spur. In his wars in Gaul he did further exercise himself to indite letters as he rode by the way, and did occupy two secretaries at once with as much as they could write; and (as Oppius writeth) more than two at a time. And it is reported that Caesar was the first that devised friends might talk together by writing ciphers in letters, when he had no leisure to speak with them for his urgent business, and for the great distance besides from Rome.

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(7) After all these things were ended, he was chosen Consul the fourth time, and went into Spain to make war with the sons of Pompey; who were yet but very young, but had notwithstanding raised a marvellous great army together, and showed to have had manhood and courage worthy

to command such an army, insomuch as they put Caesar himself in great danger of his life. The greatest battle that was fought between them in all this war was by the city of Munda. For then Caesar seeing his men sorely distressed, and having their hands full of their enemies, he ran into the press among his men that fought, and cried out unto them: 'What, are ye not ashamed to be beaten and taken prisoners, yielding yourselves with your own hands to these young boys?'
And so, with all the force he could make, having with much ado put his enemies to flight, he slew above thirty thousand of them in the field, and lost of his own men a thousand of the best he had. After this battle he went into his tent, and told his friends that he had often before fought for victory, but, this last time now, that he had fought for the safety of his own life. He won this battle on the very feast day of the Bacchanalians, in the which men say that Pompey the Great went out of Rome, about four years before, to begin this civil war. For his sons, the younger scaped from the battle; but, within few days after, Diddius brought the head of the elder.

(8) This was the last war that Caesar made. But the Triumph he made into Rome for the same did as much offend the Romans, and more, than anything that ever he had done before; because he had not overcome captains that were strangers, nor barbarous kings, but had destroyed the sons of the noblest man in Rome, whom fortune had overthrown. And, because he had plucked up his race by the roots, men did not think it meet for him to triumph so for the calamities of his country, rejoicing at a thing for the which he had but one excuse to allege in his defence unto the gods and men—that he was compelled to do that he did. And the rather they thought it not meet, because he had never before sent letters nor messengers unto the commonwealth at Rome, for any victory that he had ever won in all the civil wars, but did always for shame refuse the glory of it.

(9) This notwithstanding, the Romans inclining to Caesar's prosperity, and taking the bit in the mouth, supposing that, to be ruled by one man alone, it would be a good mean for them to take breath a little after so many troubles and miseries as they had abidden in these civil wars, they chose him perpetual Dictator. This was a plain tyranny. For to this absolute power of Dictator they added this, never to be afraid to be deposed. Cicero propounded before the Senate that they should give him such honours as were meet for a man. Howbeit others afterwards added to honours beyond all reason. For, men striving who should most honour him, they made him hateful and troublesome to themselves that most favoured him, by reason of the unmeasurable greatness and honours which they gave him. Thereupon, it is reported that even they that most hated him were no less favourers and furtherers of his honours than they that most flattered him; because they might have greater occasions to rise, and that it might appear they had just cause and colour to attempt that they did against him.

(10) And now for himself, after he had ended his civil wars, he did so honourably behave himself that there was no fault to be found in him; and therefore, methinks, amongst other honours they gave him, he rightly deserved this--that they should build him a Temple of Clemency, to

thank him for his courtesy he had used unto them in his victory. For he pardoned many of them that had borne arms against him, and, furthermore, did prefer some of them to honour and office in the commonwealth; as, amongst others, Cassius and Brutus, both the which were made Praetors. And, where Pompey's images had been thrown down, he caused them to be set up again. Whereupon Cicero said then that Caesar setting up Pompey's images again he made his own to stand the surer. And when some of his friends did counsel him to have a guard for the safety of his person, and some also did offer themselves to serve him, he would never consent to it, but said, it was better to die once than always to be afraid of death.

(11) But to win himself the love and good will of the people, as the honourablest guard and best safety he could have, he made common feasts again and general distribution of corn. Furthermore, to gratify the soldiers also, he replenished many cities again with inhabitants, which before had been destroyed, and placed them there that had no place to repair unto; of the which the noblest and chiefest cities were these two, Carthage and Corinth; and it chanced also that, like as aforetime they had been both taken and destroyed together, even so were they both set afoot again, and replenished with people, at one self time.

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(12) Besides these occasions and offences, there followed also his shame and reproach, abusing the Tribunes of the People in this sort. At that time the feast Lupercalia was celebrated, the which in old time men say was the feast of shepherds or herdmen and is much like unto the feast of the Lycaeans in Arcadia. But, howsoever it is, that day there are divers noblemen's sons, young men--and some of them magistrates themselves that govern then--which run naked through the city, striking in sport them they meet in their way with leather thongs, hair and all on, to make them give place. And many noblewomen and gentlewomen also go of purpose to stand in their way, and do put forth their hands to be stricken, as scholars hold them out to their schoolmaster to be stricken with the ferula; persuading themselves that, being with child, they shall have good delivery, and also, being barren, that it will make them to conceive with child. Caesar sat to behold that sport upon the pulpit for orations, in a chair of gold, apparelled in triumphing manner. Antonius, who was Consul at that time, was one of them that ran this holy course. So, when he came into the market-place, the people made a lane for him to run at liberty; and he came to Caesar and presented him a diadem wreathed about with laurel. Whereupon there rose a certain cry of rejoicing, not very great, done only by a few appointed for the purpose. But when Caesar refused the diadem, then all the people together made an outcry of joy. Then, Antonius offering it him again, there was a second shout of joy, but yet of a few. But when Caesar refused it again the second time, then all the whole people shouted. Caesar having made this proof found that the people did not like of it, and thereupon rose out of his chair, and commanded the crown to be carried unto Jupiter in the Capitol.

(13) After that, there were set up images of Caesar in the city with diadems upon their heads, like kings. Those the two Tribunes, Flavius

and Marullus, went and pulled down; and furthermore, meeting with them that first saluted Caesar as king, they committed them to prison. The people followed them rejoicing at it, and called them 'Brutes', because of Brutus, who had in old time driven the kings out of Rome and that brought the kingdom of one person unto the government of the Senate and people. Caesar was so offended withal, that he deprived Marullus and Flavius of their Tribuneships, and, accusing them, he spake also against the people, and called them Bruti and Cumani (to wit, 'beasts' and 'fools').

(14) Hereupon the people went straight unto Marcus Brutus, who from his father came of the first Brutus and by his mother of the house of the Servilians, a noble house as any was in Rome, and was also nephew and son-in-law of Marcus Cato. Notwithstanding, the great honours and favour Caesar showed unto him kept him back, that of himself alone he did not conspire nor consent to depose him of his kingdom. For Caesar did not only save his life after the battle of Pharsalia when Pompey fled, and did at his request also save many more of his friends besides. But, furthermore, he put a marvellous confidence in him. . . .

(15) Now they that desired change and wished Brutus only their prince and governor above all other, they durst not come to him themselves to tell him what they would have him to do; but in the night did cast sundry papers into the Praetor's seat where he gave audience and the most of them to this effect: 'Thou sleepest, Brutus, and art not Brutus indeed.' Cassius, finding Brutus' ambition stirred up the more by these seditious bills, did prick him forward and egg him on the more, for a private quarrel he had conceived against Caesar; the circumstance whereof we have set down more at large in Brutus' Life.

(16) Caesar also had Cassius in great jealousy and suspected him much. Whereupon he said on a time to his friends:
'What will Cassius do, think ye? I like not his pale looks.'
Another time, when Caesar's friends complained unto him of Antonius and Dolabella, that they pretended some mischief towards him, he answered them again:
'As for those fat men and smooth-combed heads', quoth he, 'I never reckon of them. But these pale-visaged and carrion lean people, I fear them most'. --meaning Brutus and Cassius.

(17) Certainly destiny may easier be foreseen than avoided, considering the strange and wonderful signs that were said to be seen before Caesar's death. For, touching the fires in the element and spirits running up and down in the night, and also the solitary birds to be seen at noondays sitting in the great market-place--are not all these signs perhaps worth the noting, in such a wonderful chance as happened? But Strabo the Philosopher writeth that divers men were seen going up and down in fire; and, furthermore, that there was a slave of the soldiers that did cast a marvellous burning flame out of his hand, insomuch as they that saw it thought he had been burnt, but, when the fire was out, it was found he had no hurt. Caesar self also, doing sacrifice unto the gods, found that one of the beasts which was sacrificed had no heart; and that was a strange thing in nature--how a beast could live without a heart.

(18) Furthermore, there was a certain soothsayer that had given Caesar warning long time afore, to take heed of the day of the Ides of March (which is the fifteenth of the month), for on that day he should be in great danger. That day being come, Caesar going unto the Senate-house and speaking merrily unto the soothsayer, told him:
'The Ides of March be come.'
'So be they,' softly answered the soothsayer, 'but yet they are not past.'
And the very day before, Caesar, supping with Marcus Lepidus, sealed certain letters as he was wont to do at the board; so, talk falling out amongst them, reasoning what death was best, he preventing their opinions cried out aloud:
'Death unlooked for.'

(19) Then going to bed the same night as his manner was and lying with his wife Calpurnia, all the windows and doors of his chamber flying open, the noise awoke him and made him afraid when he saw such light; but more, when he heard his wife Calpurnia, being fast asleep, weep and sign and put forth many fumbling lamentable speeches. For she dreamed that Caesar was slain, and that she had him in her arms. Others also do deny that she had any such dream; as, amongst other, Titus Livius writeth that it was in this sort: the Senate having set upon the top of Caesar's house, for an ornament and setting forth of the same, a certain pinnacle, Calpurnia dreamed that she saw it broken down and that she thought she lamented and wept for it. Insomuch that, Caesar rising in the morning, she prayed him if it were possible not to go out of the doors that day, but to adjourn the session of the Senate until another day. And if that he made no reckoning of her dream, yet that he would search further of the soothsayers by their sacrifices, to know what should happen him that day. Thereby it seemed that Caesar likewise did fear and suspect somewhat, because his wife Calpurnia until that time was never given to any fear or superstition, and then, for that he saw her so troubled in mind with this dream she had; but much more afterwards, when the soothsayers, having sacrificed many beasts one after another, told him that none did like them. Then he determined to send Antonius to adjourn the session of the Senate.

(20) But in the meantime came Decius Brutus, surnamed Albinus, in whom Caesar put such confidence that in his last will and testament he had appointed him to be his next heir, and yet was of the conspiracy with Cassius and Brutus. He, fearing that if Caesar did adjourn the session that day the conspiracy would out, laughed the soothsayers to scorn; and reproved Caesar, saying that he gave the Senate occasion to mislike with him, and that they might think he mocked them, considering that by his commandment they were assembled, and that they were ready willingly to grant him all things, and to proclaim him king of all the provinces of the Empire of Rome out of Italy, and that he should wear his diadem in all other places both by sea and land; and furthermore, that if any man should tell them from him they should depart for that present time, and return again when Calpurnia should have better dreams --what would his enemies and ill-willers say, and how could they like of his friends' words? And who could persuade them otherwise, but that they would think his dominion a slavery unto them, and tyrannical in himself? 'And yet, if it be so,' said he, 'that you utterly mislike

of this day, it is better that you go yourself in person, and saluting the Senate to dismiss them till another time.'

(21) Therewithal he took Caesar by the hand and brought him out of his house. Caesar was not gone far from his house, but a bondman, a stranger, did what he could to speak with him; and, when he saw he was put back by the great press and multitude of people that followed him, he went straight into his house, and put himself into Calpurnia's hands to be kept till Caesar came back again, telling her that he had great matters to impart unto him. And one Artemidorus also, born in the isle of Gnidos, a doctor of rhetoric in the Greek tongue, who by means of his profession was very familiar with certain of Brutus' confederates and therefore knew the most part of all their practices against Caesar, came and brought him a little bill written with his own hand, of all that he meant to tell him. He, marking how Caesar received all the supplications that were offered him, and that he gave them straight to his men that were about him, pressed nearer to him and said:
'Caesar, read this memorial to yourself, and that quickly, for they be matters of great weight, and touch you nearly.'
Caesar took it of him, but could never read it, though he many times attempted it, for the number of people that did salute him; but holding it still in his hand, keeping it to himself, went on withal into the Senate-house. Howbeit other are of opinion that it was some man else that gave him that memorial, and not Artemidorus, who did what he could all the way as he went to give it Caesar, but he was always repulsed by the people.

(22) For these things, they may seem to come by chance. But the place where the murder was prepared, and where the Senate were assembled, and where also there stood up an image of Pompey dedicated by himself amongst other ornaments which he gave unto the Theatre--all these were manifest proofs that it was the ordinance of some god that made this treason to be executed specially in that very place. It is also reported that Cassius--though otherwise he did favour the doctrine of Epicurus--beholding the image of Pompey before they entered into the action of their traitorous enterprise, he did softly call upon it to aid him. But the instant danger of the present time, taking away his former reason, did suddenly put him into a furious passion and made him like a man half besides himself. Now Antonius, that was a faithful friend to Caesar and a valiant man besides of his hands, him Decius Brutus Albinus entertained out of the Senate-house, having begun a long tale of set purpose.

So, Caesar coming into the house, all the Senate stood up on their feet to do him honour. Then part of Brutus' company and confederates stood round about Caesar's chair, and part of them also came towards him, as though they made suit with Metellus Cimber, to call home his brother again from banishment; and thus, prosecuting still their suit, they followed Caesar till he was set in his chair; who denying their petitions and being offended with them one after another, because the more they were denied, the more they pressed upon him and were the earnester with him. Metellus at length, taking [Caesar's] gown with both his hands, pulled it over his neck, which was the sign given the confederates to set upon him.

(24)Then Casca behind him strake him in the neck with his sword. Howbeit the wound was not great nor mortal, because, it seemed, the fear of such a devilish attempt did amaze him and take his strength, from him, that he killed him not at the first blow. But, Caesar, turning straight unto him, caught hold of his sword and held it hard; and they both cried out, Caesar in Latin:
'O vile traitor Casca, what doest thou?'
And Casca in Greek to his brother:
'Brother, help me.'
At the beginning of this stir, they that were present, not knowing of the conspiracy, were so amazed with the horrible sight they saw, they had no power to fly, neither to help him, not so much as once to make any outcry. They on the other side that had conspired his death compassed him in on every side with their swords drawn in their hands, that Caesar turned him nowhere but he was stricken at by some, and still had naked swords in his face, and was hacked and mangled among them, as a wild beast taken of hunters. For it was agreed among them that every man should give him a wound, because all their parts should be in this murder. And then Brutus himself gave him one wound about his privities.

(25) Men report also that Caesar did still defend himself against the rest, running every way with his body. But when he saw Brutus with his sword drawn in his hand, then he pulled his gown over his head and made no more resistance, and was driven, either casually or purposedly by the counsel of the conspirators, against the base whereupon Pompey's image stood, which ran all of a gore-blood till he was slain. Thus it seemed that the image took just revenge of Pompey's enemy, being thrown down on the ground at his feet and yielding up his ghost there for the number of wounds he had upon him. For it is reported that he had three-and-twenty wounds upon his body; and divers of the conspirators did hurt themselves, striking one body with so many blows.

(26) When Caesar was slain, the Senate, though Brutus stood in the midst amongst them as though he would have said somewhat touching this fact, presently ran out of the house, and flying filled all the city with marvellous fear and tumult; insomuch as some did shut-to their doors, others forsook their shops and warehouses, and others ran to the place to see what the matter was; and others also that had seen it ran home to their houses again. But Antonius and Lepidus, which were two of Caesar's chiefest friends, secretly conveying themselves away, fled into other men's houses, and forsook their own.

(27) Brutus and his confederates on the other side, being yet hot with this murder they had committed, having their swords drawn in their hands, came all in a troop together out of the Senate, and went into the market-place, not as men that made countenance to fly, but otherwise boldly holding up their heads like men of courage, and called to the people to defend their liberty, and stayed to speak with every great personage whom they met in their way.

(28) Of them, some followed this troop and went amongst them as if they had been of the conspiracy, and falsely challenged part of the honour with them. Amongst them was Caius Octavius and Lentulus Spinther. But both of them were afterwards put to death, for their vain covetousness of honour, by Antonius and Octavius Caesar the younger; and yet had no

part of that honour for the which they were put to death, neither did any man believe that they were any of the confederates or of counsel with them. For they that did put them to death took revenge rather of the will they had to offend, than of any fact they had committed.

(29) The next morning Brutus and his confederates came into the market-place to speak unto the people, who gave them such audience that it seemed they neither greatly reproved nor allowed the fact. For by their great silence they showed that they were sorry for Caesar's death, and also that they did reverence Brutus. Now the Senate granted general pardon for all that was past and, to pacify every man, ordained besides that Caesar's funerals should be honoured as a god, and established all things that he had done, and gave certain provinces also and convenient honours unto Brutus and his confederates, whereby every man thought all things were brought to good peace and quietness again.

(30) But when they had opened Caesar's testament and found a liberal legacy of money bequeathed unto every citizen of Rome, and that they saw his body (which was brought into the market-place) all bemangled with gashes of swords, then there was no order to keep the multitude and common people quiet. But they plucked up forms, tables, and stools, and laid them all about the body, and setting them afire burnt the corpse. Then, when the fire was well kindled, they took the firebrands and went unto their houses that had slain Caesar, to set them afire. Other also ran up and down the city to see if they could meet with any of them to cut them in pieces. Howbeit they could meet with never a man of them, because they had locked themselves up safely in their houses.

(31) There was one of Caesar's friends called Cinna, that had a marvellous strange and terrible dream the night before. He dreamed that Caesar bade him to supper, and that he refused, and would not go; then that Caesar took him by the hand, and led him against his will. Now Cinna hearing at that time that they burnt Caesar's body in the market-place, notwithstanding that he feared his dream and had an ague on him besides, he went into the market-place to honour his funerals. When he came thither, one of the mean sort asked him what his name was? He was straight called by his name. The first man told it to another, and that other unto another, so that it ran straight through them all that he was one of them that murdered Caesar. For indeed one of the traitors to Caesar was also called Cinna as himself. Wherefore, taking him for Cinna the murderer, they fell upon him with such fury that they presently dispatched him in the market-place.

(32) This stir and fury made Brutus and Cassius more afraid than of all that was past; and therefore, within few days after, they departed out of Rome. And touching their doings afterwards, and what calamity they suffered till their deaths, we have written it at large in the Life of Brutus.

(33) Caesar died a six-and-fifty years of age; and Pompey also lived not passing four years more than he. So he reaped no other fruit of all his reign and dominion, which he had so vehemently desired all his life and pursued with such extreme danger, but a vain name only and a

superficial glory that procured him the envy and hatred of his country. But his great prosperity and good fortune, that favoured him all his lifetime, did continue afterwards in the revenge of his death, pursuing the murderers both by sea and land, till they had not left a man more to be executed, of all them that were actors or counsellors in the conspiracy of his death. Furthermore, of all the chances that happen unto men upon the earth, that which came to Cassius above all other is most to be wondered at. For he, being overcome in battle at the journey of Philippes, slew himself with the same sword with the which he strake Caesar. Again, of signs in the element, the great comet, which seven nights together was seen very bright after Caesar's death, the eighth night after was never seen more. Also the brightness of the sun was darkened, the which all that year through rose very pale and shined not out, whereby it gave but small heat; therefore the air being very cloudy and dark, by the weakness of the heat that could not come forth, did cause the earth to bring forth but raw and unripe fruit, which rotted before it could ripe.

(34)But, above all, the ghost that appeared unto Brutus showed plainly that the gods were offended with the murder of Caesar. The vision was thus. Brutus, being ready to pass over his army from the city of Abydos to the other coast lying directly against it, slept every night, as his manner was, in his tent; and being yet awake thinking of his affairs--for by report he was as careful a captain and lived with as little sleep as ever man did--he thought he heard a noise at his tent door; and, looking towards the light of the lamp that waxed very dim, he saw a horrible vision of a man, of a wonderful greatness and dreadful look, which at the first made him marvellously afraid. But when he saw that it did him no hurt, but stood by his bedside and said nothing, at length he asked him what he was. The image answered him:
'I am thy ill angel, Brutus, and thou shalt see me by the city of Philippes.'
Then Brutus replied again, and said:
'Well, I shall see thee then.'
Therewithal the spirit presently vanished from him.

(35) After that time Brutus being in battle near unto the city of Philippes against Antonius and Octavius Caesar, at the first battle he won the victory, and, overthrowing all them that withstood him, he drave them into young Caesar's camp, which he took. The second battle being at hand, this spirit appeared again unto him, but spake never a word. Thereupon Brutus, knowing he should die, did put himself to all hazard in battle, but yet fighting could not be slain. So, seeing his men put to flight and overthrown, he ran unto a little rock not far off; and there setting his sword's point to his breast fell upon it and slew himself, but yet, as it is reported, with the help of his friend that dispatched him.

THE LIFE OF MARCUS BRUTUS

(1) Marcus Brutus came of that Junius Brutus for whom the ancient Romans made his statue of brass to be set up in the Capitol with the images of the kings, holding a naked sword in his hand, because he had valiantly put down the Tarquins from their kingdom of Rome. But that Junius Brutus, being of a sour stern nature, not softened by reason, being like unto sword blades of too hard a temper, was so subject to his choler and malice he bore unto the tyrants, that for their sakes he caused his own sons to be executed.

(2) But this Marcus Brutus in contrary manner, whose Life we presently write, having framed his manners of life by the rules of virtue and study of philosophy, and having employed his wit, which was gentle and constant, in attempting of great things, methinks he was rightly made and framed unto virtue. So that his very enemies which wish him most hurt, because of his conspiracy against Julius Caesar, if there were any noble attempt done in all this conspiracy, they refer it wholly unto Brutus, and all the cruel and violent acts unto Cassius, who was Brutus' familiar friend but not so well given and conditioned as he.

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(3) So, after Pompey's overthrow at the battle of Pharsalia, and that he fled to the sea, when Caesar came to besiege his camp, Brutus went out of the camp gates unseen of any man, and leapt into a marsh full of water and reeds. Then when night was come he crept out, and went unto the city of Larissa; from whence he wrote unto Caesar, who was very glad that he had scaped and sent for him to come unto him. When Brutus was come, he did not only pardon him, but also kept him always about him, and did as much honour and esteem him as any man he had in his company.

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(4) Thus Brutus had the first Praetorship, and Cassius the second; who thanked not Caesar so much for the Praetorship he had, as he was angry with him for that he had lost. But Brutus in many other things tasted of the benefit of Caesar's favour in anything he requested. For, if he had listed, he might have been one of Caesar's chiefest friends and of greatest authority and credit about him. Howbeit Cassius' friends did dissuade him from it (for Cassius and he were not yet reconciled together sithence their first contention and strife for the Praetorship) and prayed him to beware of Caesar's sweet enticements and to fly his tyrannical favours; the which they said Caesar gave him, not to honour his virtue but to weaken his constant mind, framing it to the bent of his bow.

(5) Now Caesar on the other side did not trust him overmuch, nor was not without tales brought unto him against him; howbeit he feared his great mind, authority, and friends. Yet, on the other side also, he trusted his good nature and fair conditions. For, intelligence being brought him one day that Antonius and Dolabella did conspire against

him, he answered that these fat long-haired men made him not afraid, but the lean and whitely-faced fellows, meaning that by Brutus and Cassius. At another time also when one accused Brutus unto him and bade him beware of him:
'What,' said he again, clapping his hand on his breast, 'think ye that Brutus will not tarry till this body die?'
--meaning that none but Brutus after him was meet to have such power as he had. And surely, in my opinion, I am persuaded that Brutus might indeed have come to have been the chiefest man of Rome, if he could have contented himself for a time to have been next unto Caesar and to have suffered his glory and authority which he had gotten by his great victories to consume with time.

(6) But Cassius being a choleric man and hating Caesar privately, more than he did the tyranny openly, he incensed Brutus against him.

. . . .

(7) Now when Cassius felt his friends and did stir them up against Caesar, they all agreed and promised to take part with him, so Brutus were the chief of their conspiracy. For they told him that so high an enterprise and attempt as that did not so much require men of manhood and courage to draw their swords, as it stood them upon to have a man of such estimation as Brutus, to make every man boldly think that by his only presence the fact were holy and just: if he took not this course, then that they should go to it with fainter hearts; and when they had done it they should be more fearful, because every man would think that Brutus would not have refused to have made one with them, if the cause had been good and honest. Therefore Cassius, considering this matter with himself, did first of all speak to Brutus since they grew strange together for the suit they had for the Praetorship. So when he was reconciled to him again, and that they had embraced one another, Cassius asked him if he were determined to be in the Senate-house the first day of the month of March, because he heard say that Caesar's friends should move the council that day that Caesar should be called King by the Senate. Brutus answered him, he would not be there.
'But if we be sent for,' said Cassius, 'how then?'
'For myself then,' said Brutus, 'I mean not to hold my peace, but to withstand it, and rather die than lose my liberty.'
Cassius being bold, and taking hold of this word,
'Why,' quoth he, 'what Roman is he alive that will suffer thee to die for the liberty? What, knowest thou not that thou art Brutus? Thinkest thou that they be cobblers, tapsters, or suchlike base mechanical people, that write these bills and scrolls which are found daily in thy Praetor's chair, and not the noblest men and best citizens that do it? No, be thou well assured, that of other Praetors they look for gifts, common distributions amongst the people, and for common plays, and to see fencers fight at the sharp, to show the people pastime. But at thy hands they specially require, as a due debt unto them, the taking away of the tyranny, being fully bent to suffer any extremity for thy sake, so that thou wilt show thyself to be the man thou art taken for, and that they hope thou art.'
Thereupon he kissed Brutus, and embraced him: and so, each taking leave of other, they went both to speak with their friends about it.

(8) Now amongst Pompey's friends there was one called Caius Ligarius, who had been accused unto Caesar for taking part with Pompey, and Caesar discharged him. But Ligarius thanked not Caesar so much for his discharge, as he was offended with him for that he was brought in danger by his tyrannical power. And therefore in his heart he was alway his mortal enemy, and was besides very familiar with Brutus, who went to see him being sick in his bed, and said unto him:

'O Ligarius, in what a time art thou sick!'

Ligarius rising up in his bed and taking him by the right hand, said unto him:

'Brutus,' said he, 'if thou hast any great enterprise in hand worthy of thyself, I am whole.'

(9) After that time they began to feel all their acquaintance whom they trusted, and laid their heads together consulting upon it, and did not only pick out their friends, but all those also whom they thought stout enough to attempt any desperate matter, and that were not afraid to lose their lives.

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(10) Now Brutus (who knew very well that for his sake all the noblest, valiantest, and most courageous men of Rome did venture their lives) weighing with himself the greatness of the danger, when he was out of his house he did so frame and fashion his countenance and looks that no man could discern he had anything to trouble his mind. But when night came that he was in his own house, then he was clean changed. For, either care did wake him against his will when he would have slept, or else oftentimes of himself he fell into such deep thoughts of this enterprise, casting in his mind all the dangers that might happen, that his wife, lying by him, found that there was some marvellous great matter that troubled his mind, not being wont to be in that taking, and that he could not well determine with himself. His wife Portia (as we have told you before) was the daughter of Cato, whom Brutus married being his cousin, not a maiden, but a young widow after the death of her first husband Bibulus--by whom she had also a young son called Bibulus, who afterwards wrote a book *Of the Acts and Gests of Brutus*, extant at this present day.

(11) This young lady being excellently well seen in philosophy, loving her husband well, and being of a noble courage, as she was also wise--because she would not ask her husband what he ailed before she had made some proof by her self--she took a little razor such as barbers occupy to pare men's nails, and, causing her maids and women to go out of her chamber, gave her self a great gash withal in her thigh, that she was straight all of a gore-blood; and, incontinently after, a vehement fever took her, by reason of the pain of her wound. Then perceiving her husband was marvellously out of quiet and that he could take no rest, even in her greatest pain of all she spake in this sort unto him:

'I being, O Brutus,' said she, 'the daughter of Cato, was married unto thee, not to be thy bedfellow and companion in bed and at board only, like a harlot, but to be partaker also with thee of thy good and evil fortune. Now for thyself, I can find no cause of fault in thee touching our match. But for my part, how may I show my duty towards thee and how much I would do for thy sake, if I cannot constantly bear a secret mischance or grief with thee, which requireth secrecy and fidelity? I confess that a woman's wit commonly is too weak to keep a secret safely. But yet, Brutus, good education and the company of virtuous men have some power to reform the defect of nature. And for myself, I have this benefit moreover: that I am the daughter of Cato and wife of Brutus. This notwithstanding, I did not trust to any of these things before, until that now I have found by experience that no pain nor grief whatsoever can overcome me.' With those words she showed him her wound on her thigh and told him what she had done to prove herself. Brutus was amazed to hear what she said unto him, and, lifting up his hands to heaven, he besought the gods to give him the grace he might bring his enterprise to so good pass, that he might be found a husband worthy of so noble a wife as Portia. So he then did comfort her the best he could.

(12) Now a day being appointed for the meeting of the Senate, at what time they hoped Caesar would not fail to come, the conspirators determined then to put their enterprise in execution, because they might meet safely at that time without suspicion, and the rather, for that all the noblest and chiefest men of the city would be there; who when they should see such a great matter executed, would every man then set-to their hands, for the defence of their liberty.

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(13) Caesar being slain in this manner, Brutus, standing in the midst of the house, would have spoken, and stayed the other Senators that were not of the conspiracy, to have told them the reason why they had done this fact. But they, as men both afraid and amazed, fled one upon another's neck in haste to get out at the door; and no man followed them. For it was set down and agreed between them that they should kill no man but Caesar only, and should entreat all the rest to defend their liberty. All the conspirators but Brutus, determining upon this matter, thought it good also to kill Antonius, because he was a wicked man and that in nature favoured tyranny; besides also, for that he was in great estimation with soldiers, having been conversant of long time amongst them; and specially, having a mind bent to great enterprises, he was also of great authority at that time, being Consul with Caesar. But Brutus would not agree to it. First, for that he said it was not honest. Secondly, because he told them there was hope of change in him; for he did not mistrust but that Antonius, being a noble-minded and courageous man, when he should know that Caesar was dead, would willingly help his country to recover her liberty, having them an example unto him, to follow their courage and virtue. So Brutus by this means saved Antonius' life, who at that present time disguised himself and stale away.

(14) But Brutus and his consorts, having their swords bloody in their hands, went straight to the Capitol, persuading the Romans, as they went, to take their liberty again. Now at the first time, when the murder was newly done, there were sudden outcries of people that ran

up and down the city; the which indeed did the more increase the fear and tumult. But when they saw they slew no man, neither did spoil or make havoc of anything, then certain of the Senators and many of the people, emboldening themselves, went to the Capitol unto them. There a great number of men being assembled together one after another, Brutus made an oration unto them to win the favour of the people and to justify that they had done. All those that were by said they had done well, and cried unto them that they should boldly come down from the Capitol. Whereupon, Brutus and his companions came boldly down into the market-place. The rest followed in troop; but Brutus went foremost, very honourably compassed in round about with the noblest men of the city, which brought him from the Capitol, through the market-place, to the pulpit for orations.

(15) When the people saw him in the pulpit, although they were a multitude of rakehells of all sorts and had a good will to make some stir, yet, being ashamed to do it for the reverence they bare unto Brutus, they kept silence, to hear what he would say. When Brutus began to speak, they gave him quiet audience. Howbeit, immediately after, they showed that they were not all contented with the murder. For when another called Cinna would have spoken and began to accuse Caesar, they fell into a great uproar among them and marvellously reviled him; insomuch that the conspirators returned again into the Capitol. There Brutus, being afraid to be besieged, sent back again the noblemen that came thither with him, thinking it no reason that they, which were no partakers of the murder, should be partakers of the danger.

(16) Then the next morning the Senate being assembled and holden within the Temple of the goddess Tellus (to wit, 'the Earth'), and Antonius, Plancus, and Cicero having made a motion to the Senate in that assembly that they should take an order to pardon and forget all that was past and to stablish friendship and peace again, it was decreed that they should not only be pardoned, but also that the Consuls should refer it to the Senate what honours should be appointed unto them. This being agreed upon, the Senate brake up, and Antonius the Consul, to put them in heart that were in the Capitol, sent them his son for a pledge. Upon this assurance, Brutus and his companions came down from the Capitol, where every man saluted and embraced each other; among the which Antonius himself did bid Cassius to supper to him; and Lepidus also bade Brutus; and so one bade another, as they had friendship and acquaintance together.

(17) The next day following, the Senate being called again to council did first of all commend Antonius, for that he had wisely stayed and quenched the beginning of a civil war. Then they also gave Brutus and his consorts great praises; and lastly they appointed them several governments of provinces. For unto Brutus, they appointed Creta: Afric, unto Cassius: Asai, unto Trebonius: Bithynia, unto Cimber; and unto the other Decius Brutus Albinus, Gaul on this side the Alps.

(18) When this was done, they came to talk of Caesar's will and testament, and of his funerals and tomb. Then Antonius thinking good his

testament should be read openly, and also that his body should be honourably buried and not in hugger-mugger, lest the people might thereby take occasion to be worse offended if they did otherwise, Cassius stoutly spake against it. But Brutus went with the motion, and agreed unto it. Wherein it seemeth he committed a second fault. For the first fault he did was when he would not consent to his fellow conspirators that Antonius should be slain; and therefore he was justly accused that thereby he had saved and strengthened a strong and grievous enemy of their conspiracy. The second fault was when he agreed that Caesar's funerals should be as Antonius would have them; the which indeed marred all. For first of all, when Caesar's testament was openly read among them, whereby it appeared that he bequeathed unto every citizen of Rome seventy-five drachmas a man, and that he left his gardens and arbours unto the people, which he had on this side of the river of Tiber (in the place where now the Temple of Fortune is built), the people then loved him and were marvellous sorry for him.

(19) Afterwards, when Caesar's body was brought into the market-place, Antonius making his funeral oration in praise of the dead, according to the ancient custom of Rome, and perceiving that his words moved the common people to compassion, he framed his eloquence to make their hearts yearn the more; and, taking Caesar's gown all bloody in his hand, he laid it open to the sight of them all, showing what a number of cuts and holes it had upon it. Therewithal the people fell presently into such a rage and mutiny that there was no more order kept amongst the common people. For some of them cried out: 'Kill the murderers'. Others plucked up forms, tables, and stalls about the market-place, as they had done before at the funerals of Clodius; and having laid them all on a heap together, they set them on fire, and thereupon did put the body of Caesar, and burnt it in the middest of the most holy places. And furthermore, when the fire was throughly kindled, some here, some there, took burning fire-brands, and ran with them to the murderers' houses that had killed him, to set them a-fire. Howbeit the conspirators, foreseeing the danger before, had wisely provided for themselves, and fled.

(20) But there was a poet called Cinna, who had been no partaker of the conspiracy but was alway one of Caesar's chiefest friends. He dreamed, the night before, that Caesar bade him to supper with him and that, he refusing to go, Caesar was very importunate with him and compelled him, so that at length he led him by the hand into a great dark place, where, being marvellously afraid, he was driven to follow him in spite of his heart. This dream put him all night into a fever. And yet, notwithstanding, the next morning when he heard that they carried Caesar's body to burial, being ashamed not to accompany his funerals, he went out of his house, and thrust himself into the press of the common people that were in a great uproar. And because some one called him by his name, Cinna, the people thinking he had been that Cinna who in an oration he made had spoken very evil of Caesar, they falling upon him in their rage slew him outright in the market-place.

(21) This made Brutus and his companions more afraid than any other thing, next unto the change of Antonius. Wherefore they got them

out of Rome, and kept at the first in the city of Antium, hoping to return again to Rome when the fury of the people were a little assuaged; the which they hoped would be quickly, considering that they had to deal with a fickle and unconstant multitude, easy to be carried, and that the Senate stood for them; who notwithstanding made no inquiry of them that had torn poor Cinna the poet in pieces, but caused them to be sought for and apprehended that went with firebrands to set fire of the conspirators' houses.

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(22) About that time Brutus sent to pray Cassius to come to the city of Sardis; and so he did. Brutus, understanding of his coming, went to meet him with all his friends. There, both their armies being armed, they called them both emperors. Now as it commonly happeneth in great affairs between two persons, both of them having many friends and so many captains under them, there ran tales and complaints betwixt them. Therefore before they fell in hand with any other matter, they went into a little chamber together, and bade every man avoid, and did shut the doors to them. Then they began to pour out their complaints one to the other, and grew hot and loud, earnestly accusing one another, and at length fell both a-weeping.

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(23) The next day after, Brutus, upon complaint of the Sardians, did condemn and noted Lucius Pella for a defamed person, that had been a Praetor of the Romans and whom Brutus had given charge unto; for that he was accused and convicted of robbery and pilfery in his office. This judgement much misliked Cassius, because he himself had secretly, not many days before, warned two of his friends, attainted and convicted of the like offences, and openly had cleared them; but yet he did not therefore leave to employ them in any manner of service as he did before. And therefore he greatly reproved Brutus for that he would show himself so strait and severe, in such a time as was meeter to bear a little than to take things at the worst. Brutus in contrary manner answered that he should remember the Ides of March, at which time they slew Julius Caesar; who neither pilled nor polled the country, but only was a favourer and suborner of all them that did rob and spoil by his countenance and authority. And, if there were any occasion whereby they might honestly set aside justice and equity, they should have had more reason to have suffered Caesar's friends to have robbed and done what wrong and injury they had would, than to bear with their own men. For then, said he, they could but have said they had been cowards: 'And now they may accuse us of injustice, beside the pains we take, and the danger we put ourselves into.'
And thus may we see what Brutus' intent and purpose was. . . .

(24) So, being ready to go into Europe, one night very late, when all the camp took quiet rest, as he was in his tent with a little light, thinking of weighty matters, he thought he heard one come in to him and, casting his eye towards the door of his tent, that he saw a wonderful strange and monstrous shape of a body coming towards him, and said never a word. So Brutus boldly asked what he was, a god or a man, and what cause brought him thither. The spirit answered him:

'I am thy evil spirit, Brutus; and thou shalt see me by the city of Philippes.'
Brutus, being no otherwise afraid, replied again unto it:
'Well, then I shall see thee again.'
The spirit presently vanished away; and Brutus called his men unto him, who told him that they heard no noise, nor saw anything at all. Thereupon Brutus returned again to think on his matters as he did before. And when the day brake he went unto Cassius to tell him what vision had appeared unto him in the night.

(25) Cassius being in opinion an Epicurean, and reasoning thereon with Brutus, spake to him touching the vision thus:
'In our sect, Brutus, we have an opinion that we do not always feel or see that which we suppose we do both see and feel; but that our senses being credulous, and therefore easily abused, when they are idle and unoccupied in their own objects, are induced to imagine they see and conjecture that which they in truth do not. For our mind is quick and cunning to work, without either cause or matter, anything in the imagination whatsoever. And therefore the imagination is resembled to clay, and the mind to the potter, who, without any other cause than his fancy and pleasure, changeth it into what fashion and form he will. And this doth the diversity of our dreams show unto us. For our imagination doth upon a small fancy grow from conceit to conceit, altering both in passions and forms of things imagined. For the mind of man is ever occupied; and that continual moving is nothing but an imagination. But yet there is a further cause of this in you. For, you being by nature given to melancholic discoursing, and of late continually occupied, your wits and senses having been overlaboured do easilier yield to such imaginations. For, to say that there are spirits or angels, and, if there were, that they had the shape of men, or such voices, or any power at all to come unto us, it is a mockery. And for mine own part I would there were such, because that we should not only have soldiers, horses, and ships, but also the aid of the gods, to guide and further our honest and honourable attempts.'
With these words Cassius did somewhat comfort and quiet Brutus.

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(26) Thereupon Cassius was of opinion not to try this war at one battle, but rather to delay time and to draw it out in length, considering that they were the stronger in money and the weaker in men and armours. But Brutus in contrary manner did alway before, and at that time also, desire nothing more than to put all to the hazard of battle, as soon as might be possible, to the end he might either quickly restore his country to her former liberty, or rid him forthwith of this miserable world, being still troubled in following and maintaining of such great armies together.

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(27) The next morning, by break of day, the signal of battle was set out in Brutus' and Cassius' camp, which was an arming scarlet coat; and both the chieftains spake together in the midst of their armies. There Cassius began to speak first, and said:
'The gods grant us, O Brutus, that this day we may win the field and ever after to live all the rest of our life quietly one with another. But sith the gods have so ordained it that the greatest and chiefest things

amongst men are most uncertain, and that, if the battle fall out otherwise today than we wish or look for, we shall hardly meet again, what art thou then determined to do--to fly, or die?'
Brutus answered him:
'Being yet but a young man and not over greatly experienced in the world, I trust (I know not how) a certain rule of philosophy by the which I did greatly blame and reprove Cato for killing of himself, as being no lawful nor godly act, touching the gods, nor, concerning men, valiant; not to give place and yield to divide providence, and not constantly and patiently to take whatsoever it pleaseth him to send us, but to draw back and fly. But being now in the midst of the danger, I am of a contrary mind. For, if it be not the will of God that this battle fall out fortunate for us, I will look no more for hope, neither seek to make any new supply for war again, but will rid me of this miserable world, and content me with my fortune. For I gave up my life for my country in the Ides of March, for the which I shall live in another more glorious world.'
Cassius fell a-laughing to hear what he said, and embracing him:
'Come on then,' said he, 'let us go and charge our enemies with this mind. For either we shall conquer, or we shall not need to fear the conquerors.'. . .

THE LIFE OF MARCUS ANTONIUS

(1) Antonius unwares afterwards gave Caesar's enemies just occasion and colour to do as they did; as you shall hear. The Romans by chance celebrated the feast called Lupercalia, and Caesar, being apparelled in his triumphing robe, was set in the Tribune where they use to make their orations to the people, and from thence did behold the sport of the runners. The manner of this running was this. On that day there are many young men of noble house, and those specially that be chief officers for that year, who, running naked up and down the city anointed with the oil of olive, for pleasure do strike them they meet in their way with white leather thongs they have in their hands. Antonius being one among the rest that was to run, leaving the ancient ceremonies and old customs of that solemnity, he ran to the tribune where Caesar was set, and carried a laurel crown in his hand, having a royal band or diadem wreathed about it, which in old time was the ancient mark and token of a king. When he was come to Caesar, he made his fellow-runners with him lift him up, and so he did put this laurel crown upon his head, signifying thereby that he deserved to be king. But Caesar, making as though he refused it, turned away his head. The people were so rejoiced at it that they all clapped their hands for joy. Antonius again did put it on his head. Caesar again refused it; and thus they were striving off and on a great while together. As oft as Antonius did put this laurel crown unto him, a few of his followers rejoiced at it; and as oft also as Caesar refused it, all the people together clapped their hands. And this was a wonderful thing, that they suffered all things subjects should do by commandment of their kings, and yet they could not abide the name of a king, detesting it as the utter destruction of their liberty. Caesar in a rage rose out of his seat and, plucking down the collar of his gown from his neck, he showed it naked, bidding any man strike off his head that would.

(2) This laurel crown was afterwards put upon the head of one of Caesar's statues or images, the which one of the Tribunes plucked off. The people liked his doing therein so well that they waited on him home to his house with great clapping of hands. Howbeit Caesar did turn them out of their offices for it.

(3) This was a good encouragement for Brutus and Cassius to conspire his death, who fell into a consort with their trustiest friends to execute their enterprise, but yet stood doubtful whether they should make Antonius privy to it or not. . . .

(4) Even as they had devised these matters, so were they executed; and Caesar was slain in the midst of the Senate. Antonius, being put in a fear withal, cast a slave's gown upon him and hid himself. But afterwards, when it was told him that the murderers slew no man else and that they went only into the Capitol, he sent his son unto them for a pledge and bade them boldly come down upon his word. The self-same day he did bid Cassius to supper, and Lepidus also bade Brutus. The next morning the Senate was assembled; and Antonius himself preferred a law that all things past should be forgotten, and that they should appoint

provinces unto Cassius and Brutus; the which the Senate confirmed; and further ordained that they should cancel none of Caesar's laws. Thus went Antonius out of the Senate more praised and better esteemed than ever man was, because it seemed to every man that he had cut off all occasion of civil wars, and that he had showed himself a marvellous wise governor of the commonwealth, for the appeasing of these matters of so great weight and importance.

(5) But now the opinion he conceived of himself after he had a little felt the good will of the people towards him, hoping thereby to make himself the chiefest man if he might overcome Brutus, did easily make him alter his first mind. And therefore when Caesar's body was brought to the place where it should be buried, he made a funeral oration in commendation of Caesar, according to the ancient custom of praising noblemen at their funerals. When he saw that the people were very glad and desirous also to hear Caesar spoken of and his praises uttered, he mingled his oration with lamentable words, and by amplifying of matters did greatly move their hearts and affections unto pity and compassion. In fine, to conclude his oration, he unfolded before the whole assembly the bloody garments of the dead, thrust through in many places with their swords, and called the malefactors cruel and cursed murderers. With these words he put the people into such a fury that they presently took Caesar's body and burnt it in the market-place with such tables and forms as they could get together. Then, when the fire was kindled, they took firebrands, and ran to the murderers' houses to set them a-fire and to make them come out to fight. Brutus therefore and his accomplices, for safety of their persons, were driven to fly the city.

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(6) Thus Antonius being afoot again and grown of great power, repassed over the Alps, leading into Italy with him seventeen legions and ten thousand horsemen, besides six legions he left in garrison among the Gauls under the charge of one Varius, a companion of his that would drink lustily with him and therefore in mockery was surnamed Cotylon: to wit, 'a bibber'.

(7) So Octavius Caesar would not lean to Cicero, when he saw that his whole travail and endeavour was only to restore the commonwealth to her former liberty. Therefore he sent certain of his friends to Antonius, to make them friends again. And thereupon all three met together (to wit, Caesar, Antonius, and Lepidus) in an island environed round about with a little river; and there remained three days together. Now, as touching all other matters, they were easily agreed and did divide all the Empire of Rome between them, as if it had been their own inheritance. But yet they could hardly agree whom they would put to death; for every one of them would kill their enemies, and save their kinsmen and friends. Yet at length, giving place to their greedy desire to be revenged of their enemies, they spurned all reverence of blood and holiness of friendship at their feet. For Caesar left Cicero to Antonius' will; Antonius also forsook Lucius Caesar, who was his uncle by his mother; and both of them together suffered Lepidus to kill his own brother Paulus. Yet some writers affirm that Caesar and Antonius requested Paulus might be slain, and that Lepidus was contented with it.

(8) In my opinion there was never a more horrible, unnatural, and crueller change than this was. For, thus changing murder for murder, they did as well kill those whom they did forsake and leave unto others, as those also which others left unto them to kill; but so much more was their wickedness and cruelty great unto their friends, for that they put them to death being innocents and having no cause to hate them.

(9) After this plot was agreed upon between them,the soldiers that were thereabouts would have this friendship and league betwixt them confirmed by marriage, and that Caesar should marry Claudia, the daughter of Fulvia, Antonius' wife. This marriage also being agreed upon, they condemned three hundred of the chiefest citizens of Rome to be put to death by proscription. And Antonius also commanded them to whom he had given commision to kill Cicero, that they should strike off his head and right hand, with the which he had written the invective orations, called Philippides, against Antonius. So, when the murderers brought him Cicero's head and hand cut off he beheld them a long time with great joy and laughed heartily, and that oftentimes, for the great joy he felt. Then, when he had taken his pleasure of the sight of them, he caused them to be set up in an open place, over the pulpit for orations (where when he was alive he had often spoken to the people), as if he had done the dead man hurt and not blemished his own fortune, showing himself (to his great shame and infamy) a cruel man and unworthy the office and authority he bare. His uncle Lucius Caesar also, as they sought for him to kill him and followed him hard, fled unto his sister. The murderers coming thither, forcing to break into her chamber, she stood at her chamber door with her arms abroad, crying out still:
'You shall not kill Lucius Caesar, before you first kill me that bare your captain in my womb.'
By this means she saved her brother's life.

(10) Now the government of these Triumviri grew odious and hateful to the Romans, for divers respects. But they most blamed Antonius, because he, being elder than Caesar and of more power and force than Lepidus, gave himself again to his former riot and excess when he left to deal in the affairs of the commonwealth. But, setting aside the ill name he had for his insolency, he was yet much more hated in respect of the house he dwelt in, the which was the house of Pompey the Great, a man as famous for his temperance, modesty, and civil life, as for his three Triumphs. For it grieved them to see the gates commonly shut against the captains, magistrates of the city, and also ambassadors of strange nations, which were sometimes thrust from the gate with violence; and that the house within was full of tumblers, antic dancers, jugglers, players, jesters, and drunkards, quaffing and guzzling, and that on them he spent and bestowed the most part of his money he got by all kind of possible extortions, bribery, and policy. For they did not only sell by the crier the goods of those whom they had outlawed and appointed to murder, slanderously deceived the poor widows and young orphans, and also raised all kind of imposts, subsidies, and taxes; but, understanding also that the holy Vestal nuns had certain goods and money put in their custody to keep, both of men's in the city and those also that were abroad, they went thither and took them away by force.

2. QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

A. Plutarch's History

1. Read the selection from Plutarch's "Life" of Caesar. What qualities does Caesar have that support the idea that he was a great political leader? What is your impression of Plutarch's attitude toward Caesar? What passages in Plutarch's essay can you refer to in support of your answers?

2. Read the selection from the "Life" of Brutus. What passages would you use to defend the view that Brutus was acting nobly in joining with Cassius and the other conspirators? What do you think is Plutarch's view? Is he ever critical of him?

3. Read the short selection from the "Life" of Marcus Antonius. How does his character compare with that of Caesar? Of Brutus? Of Cassius? On the basis of what you have read, who of the four do you think was best qualified for political leadership?

4. On the basis of your reading of Plutarch, what would you say "history" is? The preceding questions have had to do with interpretation and judgment. Do you think they are proper questions for historians to try to answer? Do you think you have been operating as historians in trying to answer them?

5. Re-read paragraph 6 in the "Life" of Caesar. Why does Plutarch insert in parentheses, "as Oppius writeth"? Re-read paragraph 19 in the same "Life." Why does Plutarch give two versions of Calpurnia's dream without saying which he thinks is right? What do these questions suggest further about the writing of history? Do you think written history necessarily involves uncertainty? Why, do you think?

6. Re-read paragraphs 8 and 9 in the "Life" of Caesar. Do they deal with causes? Causes of what? Is the problem of causes important in the study of history? Why do you think so?

7. Re-read paragraph 10 in the "Life" of Marcus Brutus. Consider especially the sentence, "But when night came that he was in his own house, then he was clean changed," and the sentence following. How could Plutarch have known this? Do you think such statements should be offered as history? In the light of your answer, what is your view of Plutarch as historian?

8. Re-read paragraph 18 in the "Life" of Marcus Brutus. Remember that after one of his triumphs Pompey the Great had had his own statue set up in the Forum, and that Caesar later fought and defeated Pompey.

What do you think of Plutarch's "manifest proofs" that it was not chance but "the ordinance of some god that made this treason to be executed specially in this place"?

9. Epicurus, referred to in the second half of the same paragraph, was a Greek philosopher who developed an atomic theory of the universe, did not believe that the motions of the stars were controlled by the gods, and attacked superstition. Can you tell from Plutarch's account of Cassius' asking the aid of Pompey's statue, following as it does upon the historian's "proofs" of the "ordinance of some god," whether Plutarch subscribed to the principles of Epicurus? Is Plutarch passing judgment on Cassius in this paragraph? If you think so, what is his judgment?

10. If you were going to write a history of, say, the Presidential election of 1964, upon what kinds of evidence would you base it? What questions about it would you, as historian, try to answer? What uncertainties might you encounter in performing this task?

B. Plutarch and Shakespeare

1. Re-read paragraph 13 in the "Life" of Brutus and compare it with the conspirators' debate on the problem in Julius Caesar, II-1, ll. 165-201. How do the reasons for killing Antony summarized by Plutarch differ from those advanced by Cassius in the play? Note that Cassius' speech in the play is much less detailed and explicit than Plutarch's summary? Why do you think Shakespeare boiled it down in this way?

On the other hand, Brutus' speech against killing Antony is a considerable expansion of Plutarch's report. What is the general effect of the expansion?

The lines beginning, "Let us be sacrificers, but not butchers, Cassius," have no equivalent in Plutarch. What is Shakespeare's purpose in making this addition? Do you think the playwright is justified in thus going beyond the reported facts? Explain your answer.

2. Re-read paragraph 18 in the "Life" of Brutus. Is there any doubt about Plutarch's view of Brutus' "faults" (mistakes)? Brutus takes the same two positions in the play. Do you think Shakespeare wants us to see them as clearly mistakes? Can you be sure?

3. What kind of relationship do you feel you have, as reader, with the author Plutarch? How do you feel about your relationship with the author Shakespeare?

Plutarch "tells" us about something, Shakespeare shows us what seems to be the same thing. What are the differences in effect of the two ways of communicating?

4. Re-read the last sentence of paragraph 10 in the "Life" of Caesar, then the corresponding passage in the play (II-2, ll. 33f.). How do the two passages differ in style? What is the difference of the two in their effect on you?

5. Compare Plutarch's description in the "Life" of Caesar of what

follows the assassination in paragraphs 26 and 27 with Shakespeare's version in III-1, 11. 84-133. Duscuss, again, the differences of effect.

6. Re-read paragraph 5 in the "Life" of Marcus Antonius, which is Plutarch's description of Antony's funeral oration. Compare it with the oration Shakespeare wrote for Antony. What differences in content and otherwise do you find? How would you account for them?

7. Re-read paragraph 9 in the "Life" of Marcus Antonius. How does Plutarch's account of Antonius' reception of the severed head and hand of Cicero affect you? Why do you think Shakespeare chose not to work such an incident into the play?

8. On the basis of your speculations on the preceding questions, try to draw some conclusions about the differences between historical biography and drama.

Do you think it is useful to try to understand such differences? Why or why not?

OREGON CURRICULUM STUDY CENTER

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Literature Curriculum IV

Student Version

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Student Version

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

I. INTRODUCTION

Why should people want to write their own life stories? You can probably think of various reasons. Some want to show off; they may want to shock people by telling their outrageous experiences. Others write their experiences as a form of gossiping; they may have met many famous people and believe that the world will be interested in their reminiscences. Some may have been involved in events of such importance that their personal experiences may be valuable as revealing history. All these are forms of autobiography, which is a person's life written not by someone else but by himself.

What makes a good autobiography? Let's leave aside the gossipy reminiscence and think of autobiography as an investigation of one's own life carried out by a study of one's memories. Would a person know what he is if he had no memories? You have heard of people with amnesia; they do not know anything about themselves. Obviously, memory is very important to the sense of identity. The autobiographer uses his memories to clarify his sense of himself. The more skillful he is in selecting important memories and presenting them so that the reader can share them and understand their importance, the better the autobiography.

In this unit you are going to read only memories of earlier life, experiences such as you have already lived through and that you will therefore be familiar with. But you may not have thought of your own memories as important enough to write down. Why should other people want to read my view of my experiences? you may be asking yourself. But after all, your view is a unique view. No one else has had exactly the same experiences as you have had. At the same time, as you read the following examples of autobiography, you will see that although each writer is giving us his unique view of life, his experience has something in common with yours. So the very personal and the universal meet in every autobiography.

Perhaps you know Wordsworth's little poem

My heart leaps up when I behold
    A rainbow in the sky;
So was it when my life began
So is it now I am a man;

So be it when I shall grow old.
    Or let me die!
The Child is father of the Man;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.

The last line suggests the sacredness that Wordsworth associates with his own lifelong devotion to nature. But the rest of the poem is clear enough. Wordsworth is stating his belief that the child precedes the man not merely in time but in all the inborn qualities. Here is the reason that autobiographies do not begin with adult life but generally with the moment of birth. The writers who want to understand themselves must go right back to their earliest memories.

You are going to read a variety of childhood and youth experiences. Some are happy and carefree; others describe sufferings. Some will describe experiences familiar to you; others will seem unfamiliar. But by reading selections from writers of a wide range of nationalities, including English, Russian, Irish, Hungarian, as well as American, you will have a chance to see that people everywhere share certain common experiences. Above all, reading these selections ought to help you see that your own lives are the raw materials of autobiography. (Look up the derivation of this word).

II. NEEDS, SATISFIED AND UNSATISFIED

LAURIE LEE

Laurie Lee is an English poet and author who was born in 1914. Until his highly successful autobiography, The Edge of Day, brought him financial security, his career was an extremely varied one. He had been a bandleader, poet, wandering minstrel, scenario writer, and a volunteer in the International Brigade in Spain during the Spanish Civil War. His great love, however, was poetry, and he turned once more to this after first coming to the United States on a tour of personal appearances at the time The Edge of Day was published through a book club. The whole story of his childhood is recorded with a poet's sensitivity, and surprisingly enough without rancor, even though he and his entire family had been deserted by his father. Although there was often not enough to eat, the warmth of the old kitchen provided him with a satisfying sense of security.

"The Kitchen"

by Laurie Lee

(For text, see The Edge of Day; Wm. Morrow & Co., New York, 1960; beginning on p. 64 with "Our house, and our life. . ." and ending on p. 84 with ". . . I said; that's all.")

"In the Study and the Drawing-Room"

from Childhood, Boyhood, Youth

by Lev Tolstoi

It was already dark when we reached home. Mamma seated herself at the piano, and we children fetched our paper, pencils, and paints, and settled ourselves about the round table at our drawing. I had only blue paint; nevertheless, I undertook to depict the hunt. I very quickly painted a blue boy mounted on a blue horse, and some blue dogs, but I was not quite sure whether I could paint a blue hare, and I ran to the library to consult Papa. Papa was reading; and he answered to my question, "Are there any blue hares?" without raising his head, "Yes, my dear, there are." I went back to the round table, and painted a blue hare; then I found it necessary to turn the blue hare into a bush. The bush did not please me either; I turned it into a tree, and the tree into a haystack, and the haystack into a cloud; and finally I made such a mess of my whole paper with blue paint that I tore it up in vexation, and went off to have a nap in the big arm-chair. . .

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Why does Laurie Lee still dream of this untidy past life of his childhood? Can you account for the pleasure that he takes in recalling a not very prosperous way of life?

2. Compare this kind of childhood with that of the child who has been given every so-called advantage. Do good schools, plenty of food, and plenty of privacy--all the things that might be considered advantages --necessarily provide a better environment for a poet to grow in?

3. Is this account of daily life in the kitchen arranged in any particular order?

4. What does Laurie Lee mean by saying that they never felt overcrowded in the kitchen, "being as separate as notes in a scale"? What are the implications of this comparison?

5. Consider the one-paragraph description of the kitchen: what prevents it from being just a list of objects in a room? What is the untidiness of the room made to represent?

6. What metaphor is used in the description of the kitchen to convey its effect on the imagination? Why is it appropriate?

7. Can you describe the prevailing mood of this selection? Is there any connection between this mood and the way Lee describes his past life? Why does he not simply summarize what happened, instead of giving such a detailed description?

8. Does this selection sound like part of a novel? How does it differ from a novel?

9. A writer must always be faced with the choice of what to describe in detail and what to mention as merely one element in a situation. For example, find the reference to Laurie Lee's drawing of pictures in the evening. How much detail is there? Now read the paragraph (p. 3 of this unit) from Tolstoi's autobiographical novel in which he describes a similar evening scene with the family. Why has Tolstoi given us these details? What difference does it make in the focus? You might compare focusing with a camera: if you focus on something in the foreground, the backgraound will be blurred. What is Laurie Lee's focus as compared with Tolstoi's?

10. Laurie Lee does not limit his description to visual details. Find examples of other sense impressions that he uses to give you a sense of his experience.

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

a. Describe a childhood scene in which you play a major part and one in which you play a minor part. When you are playing a minor part, what is your focus in your description? Or describe an object in a room or in nature that stands out from its background, and one which forms part of the scene.

b. Refer back to Laurie Lee's one-paragraph description of his kitchen and then write a description of your favorite room in your house. Try to describe it in such a way as to let the reader share your feeling for the room.

FRANK O'CONNOR

Frank O'Connor, an Irish man of letters and the author of many witty and moving short stories, was born in Cork in 1903. His real name is Michael O'Donovan, but as many writers have done before him, he uses a pseudonym when he publishes a story. His early work was written in Gaelic, which he learned from his grandmother. Yeats once said of him that he was doing for Ireland what Chekhov did for Russia.

His stories have been very popular in the United States, where readers have responded not only to his sense of humor, but also to the reality and warmth and depth of his characters. O'Connor said of his own art, "Story telling is the nearest thing one can get to the quality of a pure lyric poem. It doesn't deal with problems; it doesn't have any solutions to offer; it just states the human condition."

"Christmas"

by Frank O'Connor

(For text, see An Only Child; Alfred Knopf, New York, 1961; beginning on p. 129 with "Christmas was always the worst time. . ." and ending on p. 137 with ". . . with the promise of better things.")

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What is dramatic about the way this selection opens?

2. What does O'Connor mean by saying "It was the season of imagination. My trouble was that I already had more than my share of imagination"?

3. How does the incident of washing his hands and face in snow act as one illustration of the general theme of the story?

4. In this reference to the meaning of snow to the young Frank O'Connor, how does the adult view of the writer play a part?

5. Find other indications that this account is written by an adult looking back on childhood experiences.

6. Compare this selection with the one by Laurie Lee. What similarities and differences can you find? Consider particularly the point of view. Does it seem more humorous or more sad? Which dominates O'Connor's account?

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

1. Can you recall a childhood disappointment, some conflict between

what you expected and what came, a conflict between imagination and reality? Describe this incident. How does it now appear to you?

2. Every family has certain customs or ceremonies that are attached to special occasions. O'Connor mentions Christmas customs that probably strike you as strange. Write an account of how you usually spend Christmas or any other special occasions, making particular mention of traditional family customs.

III. LEARNING

SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL

When Sir Winston Churchill died early in 1965, heads of state from all over the world paid tribute to the "greatest man of our time." During the dark days of World War II in Britain, it was Churchill's personality and leadership that inspired confidence and the will to win. Shortly after he became Prime Minister in 1940, he warned his fellow countrymen, "I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears, and sweat." He urged them to stand firm, with courage and hope, so that later the world would say, "This was their finest hour." His dogged determination and faith held together not only the British people but their allies as well, until victory was attained. Certainly this was Churchill's own finest hour, the high point of a remarkably varied and dashing career, achieved against gigantic difficulties.

He had been a mediocre student at school, so his father steered him into the army, believing him to be too stupid for statesmanship! He was always a fighter and able to inspire courage when it was most needed. As Stephen Benét said, "Through Churchill all England spoke." His lasting reputation in letters may finally rest on his magnificent, moving war-time speeches, but many people still remember his big cigar, his bow tie, his extraordinary variety of hats, and his weakness for good brandy. "Good old Winnie!" the people said wherever he went.

He was born on November 30, 1874, at Blenheim Palace near Oxford. He was the son of Lord Randolph Churchill, and a direct descendant of the famous first Duke of Marlborough. His mother was a beautiful and witty American heiress, the former Jennie Jerome, and Churchill was always proud of the American blood in his veins.

After his graduation from Sandhurst (the British West Point), he combined a military with a writing career; but in 1900 he entered politics for the first time, and thus began his life of public service in the House of Commons which was to stretch over half a century. Throughout his life he continued to write, his most famous work being the four volume History of the English Speaking Peoples (1956-58). He was also an amateur painter and a do-it-yourself bricklayer.

"Harrow"

by Winston S. Churchill

(For text, see A Roving Commission: My Early Life; Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1930, copyright renewed 1958 by Winston Churchill; beginning on p. 15 with "I had scarcely passed. . . ." and ending on p. 23 with ". . .all out in later life.")

"Examinations"

by Winston S. Churchill

(For text, see A Roving Commission: My Early Life; ibid.; beginning on p. 25 with "It took me three tries. . ." and ending on p. 42 with ". . .had a much jollier time.")

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What conflict is there between Churchill's interests and the demands of his school? Do you think that this conflict ultimately did him any harm?

2. What is Churchill's tone as he says, "We were considered such dunces that we could learn only English"?

3. Read again Churchill's summary statement about his education at Harrow. "I can only record the fact that, no doubt through my own shortcomings, I was an exception. . . .Also I should have got to know my father, which would have been a joy to me". Do you think there is any connection between his inability to learn academic subjects and his lack of acceptance at home?

4. Can you see what qualities of the young Churchill would later make him a great leader? How are these qualities illustrated in his anecdotes?

5. Now consider Churchill's fondness for battle metaphors. Find examples in this selection and say what this taste indicates about his view of life.

6. Why do you think Churchill said "Most of the boys were happy, and many found in its classrooms and upon its playing fields the greatest distinction they have ever known in life." Is it "sour grapes"? Is he justifying his own failure at school in the light of his later success in life? Or is he saying that as a preparation for life, school procedures have serious shortcomings? Can you tell from the tone of the paragraph just exactly what meaning he intends the reader to take from the statement?

7. What did Churchill think an education should consist of? Was he serious about this, or speaking tongue in cheek? How do you know?

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

1. Churchill describes his experience with mathematics in a humorous and vivid way. Could you do the same for some subject that you dislike? Try to do this in a page or two. If you admit, as Churchill does, that this is a purely personal point of view, you have a better chance of winning your reader's sympathy than if you simply denounce in general terms.

2. What are the qualities that make a great leader? Do you think Churchill achieved his position of leadership because of his schooling, or in spite of it? Give reasons and examples to support your ideas.

ELIZABETH BOWEN

Elizabeth Bowen is an Anglo-Irish writer who was born in Dublin in 1899. Her theme as a novelist is usually the upper middle class, which she knows best. You will see something of the kind of life she lived when you read about her dancing lessons. Although her range is limited, her understanding of human emotion is deep, and her writing is intense and poignant.

During World War II she worked for the Ministry of Information by day, and as an air-raid warden by night. But she never stopped writing. The short stories she wrote at this time were, as she herself put it, "all wartime, none of them *war* stories." Later they were collected under the title *Ivy Gripped the Steps*, and published in the United States.

Her best known novel, *The Heat of Day*, has a wartime setting also, but the focus is upon the effect of war upon the characters rather than upon the war itself.

"Dancing in Daylight"

by Elizabeth Bowen

(For text, see Seven Winters; Memories of a Dublin Childhood; Alfred Knopf, New York, 1962; beginning on p. 35 with "The children I met at dancing class. . ." and ending on p. 42 with ". . .he was a man of the world.")

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What is the significance of the title? What kind of atmosphere is suggested by dancing in daylight? Consider the statement "The sun was made theatrical and unlikely by the pertinacious drumming of the piano."

2. What contrast is there between the dancing teacher and her pupils? Are you made to see how she might feel despair?

3. What is mistaken in the governess's view that Elizabeth Bowen could waltz if she tried? Why does the author comment "How little she knew"?

4. How do the portraits of Mavis and Paula G. and of Fergus play a part in the writer's creation of an atmosphere?

5. How does learning an art such as dancing differ from the learning done at school? Does Elizabeth Bowen give a clue to a possible difference when she tells how one day she could suddenly waltz?

WRITING ASSIGNMENT

Describe an experience of learning some activity or skill, such as painting, singing, writing, dancing, skiing, swimming, or surf boarding. Try to convey the atmosphere of one particular moment of learning, whether a successful or an unsuccessful one.

ARTHUR KOESTLER

According to a review in TIME, Arrow in the Blue is the autobiography of "a man caught in the heart of a holocaust who survives to bear witness." He certainly seems to have been a man destined to face brutality, but his early childhood experiences, unspeakably cruel though they were, helped him to develop a philosophy that enabled him to overcome the horror.

He was born in Budapest, Hungary, in 1905 and educated in Vienna. In 1926 he went to Palestine and the Near East as a correspondent for a German publication. In the middle thirties he spent some time in Central Asia and in the U. S. S. R. In 1936 he went to Spain as a correspondent for a London newspaper at the time of the Spanish Civil War. Condemned to death as a spy, he spent a hundred days in Franco's prisons, expecting at any moment to be led out and shot. Protests from England delayed his execution, and he was finally exchanged for another prisoner and returned to England. Spanish Testament (1938) is a vivid account of this ordeal.

With the outbreak of World War II in 1939, he went to France, where he was arrested by the French police as a refugee. He describes that experience in Scum of the Earth (1941). Released in January 1940, he managed to return to Britain where he enlisted in the British army.

Darkness at Noon, a brilliant novel about the Russian "treason" trials of 1936, established him as political novelist.

"The Tree of Guilt--Ahor and Babo"

by Arthur Koestler

(For text, see Arrow in the Blue; Macmillan Company, New York, 1952; beginning on p. 32 with ". . . All my earliest memories. . ." and ending on p. 38 with ". . . and a profession of faith.")

"The Hour Glass"

by Arthur Koestler

(For text, see Arrow in the Blue; ibid.; beginning on p. 41 with "Next to guilt and to fear, . . ." and ending on p. 46 with ". . . but I had found a means of living with it.")

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Could you mistake this selection for a piece from a novel?

2. What does Koestler mean by saying, "It was as if I had fallen through a manhole, into a dark underground world of archaic brutality"?

3. How do Ahor and Babo dramatize the childhood experiences that Koestler describes?

4. How does Koestler go beyond mere reminiscing to show the significance of childhood experiences? Find references to the connections between early experiences and his later life.

5. What does the hour glass symbolize for Koestler?

6. Why does the sight of snowflakes soothe the young Koestler as he is on his way to the hospital?

7. How can unpleasant or frightening experiences be instructive? What does Koestler learn from his terrifying experiences? From his loneliness?

8. You have now had examples of three kinds of learning--learning in the school-room, learning an artistic activity, and learning by suffering-can you see any common purpose in all these kinds of learning?

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

1. Choose an incident of fear or loneliness in your own life and show its possible value as teaching you something.

2. Do you have a Baron in the Bog method of helping yourself in situations of difficulty? Describe it, inventing a name for your procedure if you have not already given it a name.

3. More than physical pain, the belief that he had been deserted by his parents, that they too were helpless and afraid, caused acute suffering to the sensitive child. Does this kind of experience teach a true lesson, or does it give a distorted view of life? Express your ideas in a few paragraphs, giving examples either from your own experience, or from other people you know of.

IV. GROWING UP

LEV TOLSTOI

Count Lev Nikolaevich Tolstoi was one of Russia's most celebrated writers, as well as being a social reformer and a great thinker. His best known works are the great novels War and Peace and Anna Karenina.

He was born in the province of Tula on his family estate in 1828. Orphaned as a boy, he was brought up by female relatives and was educated by tutors until 1844 when he entered the University of Kazan. In 1847 he left school to manage his estate but found it a dull existence. He then volunteered for the Russian army and fought at Sevastopol in the Crimean War of 1855. After the war he farmed, and also opened a school for peasant children. In 1862 he married, reared a large family, and spent most of his time managing his estate and writing his books.

Taking Christ's teaching seriously, and believing a man should justify his life by doing good for himself and his neighbors, in 1890 he divided his property between his wife and children and thereafter lived in simple poverty, owning nothing himself, and preaching charity and mutual help. When he died at the age of 82, thousands of people throughout the world mourned his death.

"How I Prepare for the Examination"

from Childhood Boyhood Youth

by Lev Tolstoi

. . . The consciousness of freedom, and that spring feeling of expecting something, which I have already mentioned, agitated me to such a degree that I positively could not control myself, and I prepared very badly for my examination. Suppose you are busy in the school-room in the morning, and know that you must work, because tomorrow there is to be an examination on a subject, two whole questions on which you have not read up at all, when all of a sudden a spring perfume wafts in at the window; it seems as though you absolutely must recall something; your hands drop of themselves, your feet begin to move of their own will, and to pace back and forth, and some spring seems to be pressed in your head which sets the whole machine in motion; you feel light-headed, and gay, radiant reveries begin to run through your mind so quickly that you only succeed in catching their radiancy. Thus an hour, two hours, pass unnoticed. Or, you are sitting over your book and concentrating your attention, after a fashion, on what you are reading; and suddenly you hear the sound of a woman's footsteps and the rustle of her dress in the corridor, and everything has escaped your mind, and you just can't sit still, although you know very well that nobody can be passing along that corridor except Gasha, Grandmother's old maid-servant. "Yet suppose it should be she?" comes into your mind; "suppose it should begin now, and I miss it?" And darting out into the corridor, you see that it is indeed Gasha; yet you cannot recover control of your head for a long time--the spring has again been pressed, and again the frightful disorder has started. Or, you are sitting alone in the evening, with a tallow candle, in your room; you tear yourself from your book for a moment in order to snuff the candle or to settle in your chair more comfortably--it is dark everywhere, at the doors and in the corners, and it is quiet all over the house; and again it is impossible not to stop and listen to that silence, and not to gaze into that blackness of the open door, and not to remain thus for a long, long time immovable in the same attitude, or not to go downstairs, or walk through all the empty rooms. Often, too, I sat unnoticed for a long time in the hall listening to the sound of the "Nightingale," which Gasha was playing with one finger on the piano, as she sat alone with one tallow candle in the great apartment. And when the moon was bright I could not possibly resist rising from my bed and lying on the window over the garden, and gazing at the lighted roof of the Shaposhnikov house, and the graceful tower of our parish church, and at the night shadows of the hedge and bushes as they lay upon the garden paths. So long did I sit thus that it was ten o'clock in the morning before I could open my eyes. . .

"I am Grown Up"

. . . So there I was, without a tutor; I had a droshky of my own; my name was entered on the register of students; I had a dagger at my belt; the sentries might sometimes salute me. I was grown up, and, I thought, happy.

We decided to dine at the Yar at five o'clock; but as Volodya went off with Dubkov, and Dmitri also disappeared somewhere in his usual fashion, saying that he had an affair to attend to before dinner, I could dispose of two hours as I pleased. I walked about through all the rooms for quite a while, inspecting myself in all the mirrors, now with my coat buttoned, now with it unbuttoned, then with only the upper button fastened; and every way seemed excellent to me. Then, ashamed as I was to exhibit too much joy, I could not refrain from going to the stable and coach-house to inspect Beauty, Kuzma, and the droshky; then I went back and began to wander through the rooms again, looking in the mirrors, counting the money in my pocket, and smiling in the same blissful manner all the while. But before an hour had elapsed I felt rather bored, or sorry that there was no one to see me in that dazzling state; and I longed for movement and activity. In consequence I ordered the droshky to be brought round, and decided that the best thing would be to go to Kuznetsky Most and make some purchases.

I recollected that when Volodya entered the university he had bought himself a lithograph of Victor Adam's horses, some tobacco, and a pipe; and it seemed to me that it was indispensable that I should do the same.

I drove to Kuznetsky Most, with glances turned on me from all sides, with the bright sunlight on my buttons, on the cockade in my hat, and on my dagger, and drew up near Datsiaro's picture shop. I looked around and entered. I did not want to buy Victor Adam's horses, lest I should be accused of aping Volodya; in my eagerness to make my choice as quickly as possible, out of shame at the trouble to which I was putting the polite shopman, I took a water-colour of a woman's head which stood in the window, and paid twenty rubles for it. But after spending twenty rubles I still felt rather conscience-stricken at having troubled the two handsomely-dressed shopmen with such trifles, and yet it seemed as though they looked at me altogether too casually. To let them understand what manner of man I was, I turned my attention to a small silver piece which lay beneath a glass, and learning that it was a porte-crayon worth eighteen rubles, I ordered it to be wrapped up, paid for it, and, learning also that good pipes and tobacco were to be had in the adjoining tobacco shop. I bowed politely to the two shopmen and stepped into the street with my picture under my arm. In the neighbouring shop, on whose sign was painted a Negro smoking a cigar, I bought (also out of a desire not to imitate any one) not Zhukov, but Sultan tobacco, a Turkish pipe, and two chubouks, one of linden, the other of rosewood. On emerging from the shop, on my way to my droshky, I saw Semenov walking along the sidewalk at a rapid pace, dressed in civil clothes, and with his head bent down. I was vexed that he did not recognize me. I said in quite a loud tone, "Drive up!" and, seating myself in the droshky, I overtook Semenov.

"How do you do?" I said to him.

"My respects," he answered, pursuing his way.

"Why are you not in uniform?" I inquired.

Semenov halted, screwed up his eyes, and showed his white teeth, as though it hurt him to look at the sun, but in reality to express his indifference towards my droshky and uniform, gazed at me in silence, and walked on.

From Kuznetsky Most I drove to the confectioner's shop on Tverskaya; and though I tried to pretend that it was the newspapers in the shop that interested me principally, I could not restrain myself, and began to devour one cake after another. Despite the shame I felt before some gentlemen who were gazing at me with curiosity from behind their papers I ate eight cakes, of all the sorts they kept in the shop, with great rapidity.

On arriving home I felt a little touch of heart-burn, but paying no attention to it, I busied myself with examining my purchases. The picture so displeased me that I not only did not have it framed and hung it in my room, as Volodya had done, but I even hid it in a drawer where no one could see it. The pencil-case did not please me either at home. I laid it on the table, comforting myself with the thought that it was made of silver, a thing of worth and extremely useful to a student.

As for the smoking things I resolved to put them into immediate use, and try them.

Having unsealed a quarter-pound package, and carefully filled my Turkish pipe with the reddish-yellow, fine-cut Sultan tobacco, I laid a burning coal upon it, and taking one of my pipe-stems between my third and fourth fingers (a position of the hand which pleased me extremely), I began to smoke.

The odour of the tobacco was very agreeable, but it tasted bitter, and the smoke caught my breath. Yet I forced myself to keep it up for quite a long time, inhaling the smoke, trying to puff it out in rings. The whole room was soon filled with clouds of bluish smoke; the pipe began to bubble, the hot tobacco to leap; I felt a bitterness in my mouth and a slight dizziness in my head; I tried to rise and look at myself in the glass with my pipe, when, to my amazement, I began to stagger, the room whirled round, and as I glanced in the mirror, which I had reached with difficulty, I saw that my face was as white as a sheet. I barely succeeded in dropping upon a divan when I was sensible of such illness and feebleness that, fancying the pipe had been fatal to me. I thought that I was dying. I was seriously alarmed, and wanted to summon assistance and send for the doctor.

But this terror did not last long. I quickly understood where the trouble was; and I lay for a long time on the lounge, weak, with a frightful pain in my head, gazing with dull attention at Bostandzhoglo's coat of arms reproduced upon the quarter-pound package, on the pipe and smoking utensils, and the remains of the confectioner's cakes rolling on the floor, and thought sadly in my disenchantment, "I am surely not grown up yet, if I cannot smoke like other people; and it is plain that I am not destined to hold my pipe, like others, between my middle and my third fingers, to swallow the smoke, and puff it out through my blonde moustache."

When Dmitri called for me at five o'clock he found me in this unpleasant condition. But after I had drunk a glass of water I was nearly well again and ready to go with him.

"What made you want to smoke?" he said, as he gazed upon the traces of my smoking. "It's all nonsense, and a useless waste of money. I have promised myself that I will never smoke. But hurry up--we have to call for Dubkov."

The Return Home

. . . We arrived at Petrovskoye at night; and I was sleeping so soundly that I saw neither the house nor the birch avenue, nor any of the household, who had already retired and had long been asleep. Old Foka, bent, barefooted, and wrapped in a kind of woman's wadded dressing-gown, with a candle in his hand, opened the door to us. He quivered with joy on seeing us, kissed us on the shoulders, hastily gathered up his felt rug, and began to dress himself. I passed through the vestibule and staircase without being thoroughly awake; but in the anteroom the lock of the door, the bolt , the crooked boards, the clothes-press, the ancient candlestick spotted with tallow as of old, the shadow of the cold, bent, recently-lighted tallow candle in the image-lamp, the always dusty double window which was never removed, behind which, as I remembered, there grew a mountain-ash--all this was so familiar, so full of memories, so harmonious within itself, as though united in one thought, that I suddenly felt upon me the caress of this dear old house. "How could we, the house and I," I wondered, "do without each other so long?" and I ran in haste to see whether the rooms were the same. Everything was the same, only everything had grown smaller, lower, while I taller, heavier and clumsier. But the house received me joyously into its embrace just as I was; and every floor, every window, every step of the stairs, every sound, awakened in me a world of forms, feelings, occurrences of the happy past which would never return. We went to the bedroom of our childhood; all my childish terrors were lurking again in the darkness of the corners and doors. We went into the drawingroom: the same gentle motherly love was diffused over every object in the room. We went to the hall: it seemed as though boisterous, careless childish mirth had lingered in this apartment, and was only waiting to be revived. In the sitting-room whither Foka led us, and where he had made up beds for us, it seemed as if everything--the mirror, the screen, the ancient wooden icon, every bump of the walls covered with white paper--all spoke of suffering, of death, of that which would never exist again.

We lay down, and Foka left us after wishing us goodnight.

"It was in this room that Mamma died, wasn't it?" said Volodya.

I did not answer him, and pretended to be asleep. If I had said a word, I should have burst out crying.

a. "How I Prepare for the Examination"

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What details help to convey the sense that studying for exams may be very difficult? What would your own list of distractions be? Write a paragraph describing your feelings as you try to study amid distractions that come mainly from your own day-dreams.

2. Is there any relationship, do you think, between Tolstoy's day-dreaming and his becoming a novelist? Is there any difference between the ordinary day-dreamer who will never do anything creative and one who will use his dreams to create something?

b. "I Am Grown Up"

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. In spite of the differences between this young man's experience and an American boy's in the 1960's, can you find any elements of the description that strike you as familiar? How do you explain these similarities between growing up as a Russian boy of the early nineteenth century and growing up as an American boy about 150 years later?

2. Why does the boy who tells the story have to buy the same things that his older brother, Volodya, bought when he entered the university?

3. Of course, in Tolstoy's account of growing up, we have a contrast between the person he would like to be--that is, a poised young man of the world--and the person he actually is. What details are used to illustrate the incompleteness of his transition to adulthood?

4. Is there any indication that this account is not written by a boy but by an adult? What clues can you find that tell you that the writer has finished with this particular stage of growing up?

5. How does one moment of this whole experience lead to the next? Has the writer made the order of events convincing?

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

1. Do you notice any difference in style between this selection and the preceding ones? It might help you to understand the difference if you realize that the Tolstoy passages are from an autobiographical novel, not a straight autobiography. Although this novel is based on Tolstoy's own life, he does not have to confine himself to the facts but can use his imagination to invent forgotten details or create experiences that he feels his story demands. Try to turn some incident from your own life into a short piece of autobiographical fiction by portraying yourself, not as you actually were in the situation, but as the person you would like to be.

2. Take the incident in which the boy smokes his pipe: how does this rather commonplace incident become interesting? One person might sum it up in a sentence: "I tried smoking for the first time and felt sick." What does Tolstoy do to enable you to share the experience? Now take some equally ordinary experience and make it interesting to a reader by showing it as if you were the first person in the world to have this experience.

c. "The Return Home"

STUDY QUESTION

1. If everything is so much the same in the old house, why have the rooms grown smaller and lower? Which is emphasized here, the actual appearance of the rooms or the way they look to the boy who returns after a long absence?

WRITING ASSIGNMENT

The relationship of a person to a place is a changing one, especially noticeable if the person goes away for some time and then returns. Have you had a similar experience of coming back to a place and finding it physically unchanged but different because you have changed? Write an account of this experience in such a way that the reader will understand the change that occurred in you.

2. Lincoln Steffens

Lincoln Steffens (1866-1936) grew up as a boy in California. He went to college in California and then spent several years studying in Europe. He returned to the United States and became a reporter, editor, and feature writer for various magazines and newspapers. He achieved his fame writing articles exposing graft and corruption in politics and business, and became one of the best-known of such exposé-writers, who came to be called "muckrakers." The selection that follows tells of his first experience with politics as a child. In it we see the young boy growing up as he observes the realities of the workings of the California State Legislature. In view of his later career, the experience and his reaction to it are particularly interesting.

"A Painter and a Page"

by Lincoln Steffens

(For text see The Autobiography of Lincoln Steffens; Harcourt, Brace & Co., New York, 1931, copyright renewed 1959 by Peter Steffens; beginning on p. 42 with "My father brought home to dinner. . ." and ending on p. 50 with ". . .things more in my line.")

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. It is a far cry from a picture of the mud flats of the American River to the State Capitol. How does Steffens unify the two main scenes of this chapter? What is he trying to do? How successful do you think he was?

2. Both the painting and political sections of this chapter can be said to deal with a basic conflict or contrast. What is it?

3. What difference is there in the two incidents?

4. In the last paragraph Steffens asks a question which he does not answer. What question is he asking? Why doesn't he answer it? Can you answer the question?

5. Why did Steffens lay the question aside?

WRITING ASSIGNMENT

Steffens states that his experience with the way politics really worked was a "revelation" and a "revolution." Write a chapter from your own autobiography in which you describe a similar experience which had a permanent effect on you.

"Confession"

from Childhood Boyhood Youth

by Lev Tolstoi

With these and other similar distracting thoughts I returned to the sitting-room when all were assembled there, and the priest, rising, prepared to read the prayer before confession. But as soon as the stern, expressive voice of the monk resounded amid the universal silence, and especially when he addressed us with the words, "Confess all your sins without shame, concealment or extenuation, and your soul shall be cleansed before God; but if ye conceal aught, so shall ye have greater sin," the devout agitation which I had felt on the preceding morning, at the thought of the coming sacrament, returned to me. I even took pleasure in realizing my state, and tried to retain it, putting a stop to all thoughts which occurred to me, and trying to fear something.

Papa was the first to go to confess. He remained for a very long time in Grandmamma's room, and meanwhile all of us in the sitting-room remained silent, or discussed in whispers who should go first. At length the monk's voice was again heard behind the door as he read a prayer, and then Papa's footsteps. The door creaked and he came out, coughing, holding one shoulder higher than the other, as was his wont, and not looking at any of us.

"You go now, Lyuba, and see that you say everything. You are my greatest sinner, you know," said Papa gaily, as he gave her cheek a pinch.

Lyubochka went red and pale by turns, took her list out of her apron and hid it again, and, her head sunk between her shoulders, as though expecting a blow from above, passed through the door. She did not stay long, but when she came out her shoulders were heaving with sobs.

Finally, after pretty Katenka, who came out smiling, my turn came. I entered the half-lighted room with the same dull terror, and a desire deliberately to increase that terror. The priest stood before the lectern, and slowly turned his face towards me.

I did not remain more than five minutes in Grandmamma's room, but when I came out I was happy and, according to my convictions at the time, a perfectly pure, morally changed, and new man. Although all the old surroundings of life struck me unpleasantly, the same rooms, the same furniture, the same face in myself (I should have liked to change my exterior, just as I thought all my interior had been changed) --still, notwithstanding this, I remained in this refreshing frame of mind until I went to bed.

I was already drowsing off, going over in my imagination all the sins of which I had been purified, when all at once I recalled one shameful sin which I had kept back in confession. The words of the prayer before confession came back to me and resounded in my ears without intermission.

All my composure vanished in a moment. "And if ye conceal aught, so shall ye have greater sin," I heard incessantly. I saw that I was such a terrible sinner that there was no punishment adequate for me. Long did I toss from side to side as I reflected on my situation, and awaited God's punishment and even sudden death from moment to moment--a thought which threw me into indescribable terror. But suddenly the happy thought occurred to me to go by foot or by cab to the priest at the monastery as soon as it was light and confess again, and I became calm.

"The Trip to the Monastery"

I woke up several times that night, fearing to oversleep, and at six o'clock I was already on my feet. It was hardly light at the windows yet. I put on my clothes and my boots, which lay in a heap and unbrushed by the bed, for Nikolai had not had time to take them away; and without washing or saying my prayers, I went out into the street alone for the first time in my life.

From behind the big, green-roofed house on the other side of the street, the red flush of the dull, cold dawn appeared. A sharp spring morning frost bound the mud and the rivulets, crackled underfoot, and nipped my face and hands.

There was not a single cabman in our street as yet, though I had relied on one in order that I might go there and back the more speedily. Only a few carts were dragging slowly along the Arbat, and a couple of stonemasons passed along the pavement in conversation. After I had gone some thousand paces I began to meet men and women with baskets going to market, or with casks going for water. A pie-seller had come out at the corner; one kalach-baker's shop was open, and at the Arbatsky Gate I came across an old cabman asleep on his blue, worn, patched droshky. Probably still in his sleep he asked me for twenty kopeks to drive me to the monastery and back, but then he suddenly came to; I was about to get in when he lashed his horse with the end of the reins and almost drove away. "My horse wants feeding," he muttered. "I can't take you, sir."

It was with difficulty that I persuaded him to stop by offering him forty kopeks. He pulled up his horse, looked me over carefully, and said, "Get in, sir." I confess that I was rather afraid that he would drive me to some secluded lane and rob me. Catching hold of his tattered coat-collar, his wrinkled neck showing pitifully above his hunched back, I climbed into the blue, curved, rocking seat, and we went rattling down Vozdvizhenka. On the way I observed that the back of the droshky was lined with bits of the greenish material from which the driver's coat was made; and this fact calmed me, for some reason, and I was no longer afraid that he would carry me off to an obscure alley and rob me.

The sun was already quite high, and had gilded the cupolas of the churches brilliantly when we arrived at the monastery. Frost still linger in the shade; but along the road flowed swift turbid streams, and the horse splashed along through the thawed slush. On entering the enclosure of the monastery, I inquired of the first person I saw where I could find the priest.

"Yonder is his cell," said the passing monk, pausing for a moment and pointing at a small house with a tiny portico.

"I am extremely obliged," said I.

Then I fell to wondering what all the monks (who at the moment were coming out of the church) must think of me for they all glanced in my direction. I was neither a grown-up nor a child, my face was unwashed, my hair unbrushed, my clothes untidy, and my boots unblacked and muddy. They must be trying to assign me to some class of people--for they stared at me hard enough. And yet I walked on in the direction which the young priest had pointed out to me.

An old man in a black garment, with a thick grey beard, met me in the narrow path which led to the cell and asked what I wanted.

For a moment I wanted to say "Nothing," run back to the carriage, and drive home; but the old man's face inspired confidence, in spite of his contracted brows. I said that I must see the priest, and mentioned his name.

"Come, young sir, I'll show you the way," said he, turning back, and apparently divining at once the reason of my visit. "The father is at matins; hewill soon be here."

He opened the door and led me through a clean vestibule and anteroom, over a clean linen floor-covering, into the cell.

"Please wait here," said he, with a kindly, reassuring glance, and went out.

The little room in which I found myself was extremely small, and arranged with great neatness. Its furniture only consisted of a little table covered with oil-cloth, which stood between two double-leafed windows, and upon it two pots of geraniums, a stand supporting the images, and a lamp which swung before them, one arm-chair and two ordinary chairs. In the corner hung a clock its dial adorned with painted flowers, and with its brass weights on chains half unwound; two cassocks hung from nails in the partition, behind which was probably the bed, and which was joined to the ceiling by whitewashed wooden planks.

The windows looked out upon a white wall about two arshins away. Between them and the wall there grew a little bush of lilac. Not a sound from without penetrated to the room, so that the regular tick of the pendulum sounded loud in the silence. As soon as I was alone in this quiet nook, all my former ideas and memories suddenly left my head completely, as if they had never been there, and I became wholly absorbed in an inexpressibly pleasant reverie. That faded nankeen cassock, with its tattered lining, the worn black leather bindings of the books, and their brass clasps, the dull green of the plants, the carefully watered earth and well-washed leaves, and the monotonous, intermittent sound of the pendulum in particular, spoke to me distinctly of a new life hitherto unknown to me--a life of solitude, of prayer, of calm, quiet happiness.

"Months pass by, years pass by," I thought. "He is always alone, always calm; he always feels that his conscience is pure in the sight of God, and that his prayers are heard by Him." For half an hour I sat on that chair, trying not to move and not to breathe loudly, in order that I might not disturb that harmony of sounds which were telling me so much. And the pendulum ticked on as before, loudly to the right, more softly to the left.

"A Second Confession"

The priest's footsteps aroused me from this reverie.

"Welcome," said he, adjusting his grey hair with his hand. "What can I do for you?"

I asked him to bless me, and kissed his short yellow hand with peculiar satisfaction.

When I explained my petition to him, he made no reply, but went to the icon and began to hear my confession.

When I overcame my shame and told him all that was in my soul and the confession was over, he laid his hands upon my head, and in his quiet, melodious voice he said, "My son, may the blessing of our heavenly Father be upon you, and may He preserve faith, peace, and gentleness within you evermore. Amen."

I was perfectly happy; tears of bliss rose in my throat; I kissed the folds of his fine-cloth cassock, and raised my head. The monk's face was quite calm.

I felt that I was taking delight in the sensation of emotion; and, fearing that I might banish it in some way, I took leave of the priest in haste, and without glancing aside in order not to distract my attention, quitted the enclosure, and seated myself again in the motley and jolting droshky. But the jolts of the equipage, the variety of objects which flashed before my eyes, speedily dissipated that sensation, and I already began to think that the priest was probably thinking by this time that such a fine soul of a young man as I he had never met, and never would meet in all his life, and that there were no others like me. I was convinced of that, and this conviction called forth in me a feeling of cheerfulness of such a nature that it demanded communication to some one.

I wanted dreadfully to talk to some one; but as there was no one at hand except the cabman, I turned to him.

"Well, was I away very long?" I asked.

"Not very, but it was time to feed the horse long ago, I am a night-cabman, you see," he replied, apparently more cheerful now that the sun was up.

"It seemed to me that I was no more than a minute," said I. "And do you know why I went to the monastery?" I added, changing my seat to the hollow nearer the driver.

"Well, it's not my business, is it? I take my passengers wherever they order me," he replied.

"No, but still what do you think?" I insisted.

"Well, probably some one is going to be buried, and you went to buy a place," said he.

"No, my friend; do you know what I went for?"

"I can't know, sir," he repeated.

His voice seemed to me so kind that I decided to relate to him the cause of my journey, and even the feeling which I had experienced, for his edification.

"I will tell you, if you like. You see--"

And I told him everything, and described all my beautiful sentiments. I blush even now at the memory of it.

"Yes, sir," he said incredulously.

And for a long time after that he sat silent and motionless, only now and then adjusting the tail of his coat; it kept escaping from beneath his motley foot which jogged up and down in its big boot on the footboard. I already imagined that he was thinking just the same about me as the priest--that is, that there was not another fine young man like me in the world; but he suddenly turned to me.

"Well, master, that's the sort of thing for you gentlefolks."

"What?" I inquired.

"Just the thing for gentlefolks."

"No, he has not understood me," I thought, but I said nothing more to him until we reached home.

Although the feeling of fervour and devotion did not last the whole way, self-satisfaction in having experienced it did, in spite of the people who dotted the sunlit streets with colour everywhere; but as soon as I reached home that feeling entirely disappeared. I did not have my two twenty-kopek pieces to pay the driver. Gavrilo the butler, to whom I was already indebted, would not lend me any more. Seeing me twice run through the court-yard to get the money, the cabman must have guessed the reason, for he climbed down from his droshky, and, although he had seemed to me so kind, began to talk loudly, with evident hostility towards me, about swindlers who would not pay their fare.

Every one was still asleep in the house, so, except for the servants there was no one from whom I could borrow the forty kopeks. Finally Vasili, under my sacred, most sacred word of honour, in which (as I could see by his face) he had not the slightest faith, but because he loved me and remembered the service which I had rendered him, paid the cabman for me. When I went to dress for church, in order that I might receive the communion with the rest, and it turned out that my new clothes had not yet come, I was highly incensed. Dressing in another suit, I went to communion in a strange mental tumult, and filled with utter distrust of all my finer impulses.

"Confession"

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Why does Tolstoy describe the appearance of each member of the household as he or she comes out of the room for saying confessions?

2. The boy in the story is always very concerned about his appearance. Why does he say, "I should have liked to change my exterior, just as I thought all my interior had been changed"? Does it have anything to do with letting the world know how he has changed? Consider his eagerness to be admired by the cab driver after the visit to the monastery.

3. In the scene of the visit to the monastery, what do details of the frosty morning and the aged cab contribute to the adventure?

4. Why is the priest's room described in such detail?

5. How much of the boy's motive in going to the second confession seems to you to be a religious one? Consider, for example, his speculations about what the priest will think of him.

6. What contrast is there between what the boy thinks the cab driver is thinking of him and what the man is actually thinking as revealed by the remark "Just the thing for gentlefolks"?

7. Does the conclusion of this incident seem appropriate or inappropriate to the character of the boy? Is there any contradiction between his desire for a pure soul, as illustrated by his double confession,

and his anger at not having a new suit to wear to church? Do you think that he is unusual in his shifts of feeling, or is this fairly common to the young?

WRITING ASSIGNMENT

Have you ever done something, thinking to make a fine impression, only to find your action has the opposite effect? Write an account of your experience, being careful to let the reader understand why your intention failed.

V. CONCLUSION

ALBERT EINSTEIN

Albert Einstein, who is best known for his theory of relativity which laid the foundation for the release of atomic energy, was born in Ulm, Germany, in 1879. In 1905 he became a Swiss citizen and worked as an examiner for the Swiss Patent Office at Bern. This gave him time to follow the scientific investigations which made him famous.

While he was visiting the United States in 1933, the Nazi government in Germany confiscated his property because he was a Jew and made it impossible for him ever to return to his native land. He accepted an offer from Princeton University to direct the School of Mathematics in the newly created Institute for Advanced Study, and he remained there, quietly living in a simple frame house nearby, until his death in 1955.

A very modest man, he refused the Presidency of the new state of Israel, which was offered him in 1952, insisting he was not fitted for such a position. He also refused large sums of money from publishers who begged him to write his autobiography. The only existing document written by himself about his life consists of a few "notes" written for a scholarly volume, for which he received no payment.

By nature, Einstein was a deeply religious man. To him, the universe revealed absolute law and order. Discovering the mysterious laws of science was for him a profoundly spiritual experience. "God may be sophisticated," he once remarked, "but He is not malicious."

"Self-Portrait"

by Albert Einstein

(For text see Out of My Later Years; Philosophical Library, New York, 1950; p. 5, beginning with "Of what is significant. . ." and ending with ". . . delicious in the years of maturity.")

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What difference between the outer life of a person and the inner is suggested here? Would the existence of an inner life provide a good reason for writing an autobiography, since no one else can know it?

2. Explain the last sentence: how can solitude become delicious? Does Einstein mean physical solitude or some other kind?

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

1. Does Einstein seem to be denying the value of autobiography? If so, he is expressing only his own view. Write either a defense of autobiographical writing or a criticism of it.

2. Of the people whose lives you have glimpsed here, Einstein is the only scientist. In what ways are his reactions to the circumstances of his life different from the others? Would you say this is generally true of scientists as opposed to writers? If so, can you explain it?